

# 2024 Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Policy

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## Preamble

We the members of Rocky Mountain Farmers Union, present our policy to address agriculture, energy, environment, social, and other issues vital to the lives of all Americans. This policy has been developed in true democratic fashion, with recommendations and proposals originating from our local chapters. These recommendations and revisions have been approved by members at the RMFU annual convention.

RMFU’s policy is divided into four sections: National Advocacy, Colorado, New Mexico, and Wyoming. This approach is more evidence of our grassroots culture, with our members having a say not only in their own state policy, but also in the policy developed by National Farmers Union at its annual convention where RMFU delegates will join others from across the country to debate and approve the national organization’s policy.

RMFU’s policy provides our members and communities with the tools they need to be profitable, to build better futures, and to have a voice that is heard by local, state, and national policymakers.

RMFU’s policy is representative of its members in CO, WY, and NM regardless of their age, race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, citizenship, immigration status, gender expression, marital status, source of income, military status, disability, criminal record, genetic information, or any other status protected by applicable federal, state, or local law.

Our members believe a “family farm” is an agricultural production unit using land and other capital investments and operated by one or more farm operator families who provide the management, take the economic risk, and do the work required to operate and manage the unit. A “family farm corporation” is defined as a corporation founded for farming and the ownership of agricultural land in which most of the voting stock is held by, and the majority of the stockholders are, members of a family, at least one of whom is the person managing and working on the farm.



# RMFU POLICY FOR NATIONAL ADVOCACY

## Article I. Government Programs

### A. National Food and Farm Policy

We call for the implementation of food, farm, fuel, and fiber policies that strengthen the family farm unit for protecting safe, healthy, domestically produced food, fuel, and fiber for our citizens. These policies should include the following:

- A goal of income parity on par with other sectors of the economy.
- Credit systems that provide flexibility to farmers and ranchers to finance inputs and invest in economic opportunities, including, but not limited to, processing and production facilities, to increase income.
- Conservation programs that will compensate agricultural producers while protecting our nation's greatest natural resources— the land, air, and water.

We support referring to the “Farm Bill” as the “Food and Farm Bill” and advocating for such in our national conversations.

We support:

- Financial, tax, and grant incentives to assist in making farming a career opportunity for all people, with a focus on new and beginning farmers and ranchers.
- Simplified federal grant application processes.
- International trade agreements that achieve profitability for all American producers, regardless of how small in size.
- Required Congressional approval of sanctions and embargos of agricultural and medical exports before they can be enacted.
- Incentives to encourage production of and investment by family farmers and community-based organizations in the processing and distribution of renewable energy systems.
- Regulations that establish and maintain fair, open, and competitive markets with a transparent price discovery system.
- Implementation and safeguarding of food safety measures and enforcement of those measures already in place.
- Increased food safety and security with additional testing especially of foreign-produced products.
- Enforcement of existing food safety regulations that are scale-appropriate for handlers and processors.
- Country of Origin Labeling.

We urge a continued evaluation of the regulations for the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA), to rationally address the practice of organic, natural, and diversified farm operations vital to the local food economy.

We urge that requirements and fees be scaled with a focus on the difference between corporate and family agriculture and remove from the regulations the needless elements that serve the purposes of corporate agriculture at the expense of family farms, sovereign nations, growers of local foods, and consumers.

1 We encourage the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to develop adequate training requirements for  
2 qualified auditors under the Preventive Controls regulation.

3  
4 We urge Congress to provide funding to support the implementation of FSMA and to reinstate the Grain  
5 Inspection, Packers, and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA).

6  
7 We support USDA efforts to modernize the enforcement of the Packers & Stockyards Act through the three  
8 actions related to rulemaking and urge Congress to expedite the rulemaking process.

9 These three rules include:

- 10 1. A new rule that will provide greater clarity to strengthen enforcement of unfair and deceptive  
11 practices, undue preferences, and unjust prejudices.
- 12 2. A new poultry grower tournament system rule, with the current inactive proposal to be withdrawn.
- 13 3. A rule to clarify that parties do not need to demonstrate harm to competition in order to bring an  
14 action under section 202 (a) and 202 (b) of the P&S Act.

15  
16 We support Packers and Stockyards rule changes that support the financial sustainability of family farms  
17 and ranches.

## 18 19 **B. Farm Program Recommendations**

### 20 **1. Parity**

21 We support the concept of parity (equal purchasing power) of commodity prices to provide equality of  
22 income for farm families comparable to incomes of families in other segments of the economy.

### 23 24 **2. The Concept of Parity**

25 Parity (farm price index) measures the percentage change in prices received by farmers for the products they  
26 sell in relation to the prices paid by farmers for goods and services used in production, interest on capital,  
27 taxes, and wages, compared with the base period of 1910-1914. A ratio of 100 percent implies the same  
28 relationship that existed in the base period. A 75 percent parity ratio indicates that the farmer's purchasing  
29 power was down to 75 percent of what it would buy in the base period. Congress deemed the 1910-1914  
30 base period as one in which there was a balanced relationship between farm and non-farm prices.

### 31 32 **3. Parity as a Measurement**

33 We reaffirm our basic commitment to the parity formula (using the base year 1910-1914) established by law  
34 as the standard by which to determine prices for all agricultural commodities.

### 35 36 **4. The Goal of Parity**

37 Price supports for agricultural commodities are meant to achieve parity for family farmers and ranchers. The  
38 levels of support of farm prices should be adjusted regularly to reflect changes in costs to farmers of  
39 producing farm commodities and for family living.

1                   **5. Future Farm Programs**

2 We support the development of a future farm program that enables farmers to achieve income parity on par  
3 with other sectors of the economy at an income level that covers costs of production plus a reasonable rate  
4 of return.

5  
6 We urge future farm programs to include income support mechanisms, such as supply management.  
7

8 We urge future farm programs to include farmer-owned commodity loans on a limited amount of production  
9 for an individual operator. The commodity loan rate should be set at 80 percent of the national average of  
10 cost-of-production, indexed annually for inflation. This program would provide farmers a tool to empower  
11 themselves, on a voluntary basis, to influence market prices. The proposed income support should link  
12 closely with the government’s risk management programs, insuring against production losses.  
13

14 We urge that future farm programs provide producers with appropriate compensation for participation in  
15 conservation programs.  
16

17 We urge future farm programs to provide incentives to encourage producer participation directly in the  
18 development, ownership, processing, and distribution of renewable energy and fuels. Such farm programs  
19 will be flexible, will limit government financial exposure, will keep the government out of the storage  
20 business, and will provide farmers with income support at a time of low market prices, along with the tools  
21 to empower farmers to improve market prices and manage their risks during natural disasters.  
22

23 We strongly support establishing and funding programs within the agencies of USDA that would aid  
24 beginning farmers/ranchers in their effort to become full-time producers.  
25

26 We urge that any reduction in any federal agricultural programs be reallocated and committed to fund  
27 improvement in the permanent disaster program, commodity support program, risk management program,  
28 or funding for conservation, renewable energy, and/or rural development programs.  
29

30 We support farm program payments for the benefit of family farms and family farm corporations.  
31

32 We support limits on farm program payments that benefit multi-nation corporations, oligopolies, or food  
33 system dominating companies.  
34

35                   **6. Organics & “Natural” Foods**

36 We support those farmers who wish to pursue the production of food and fiber through organic, sustainable  
37 and regenerative methods of farming.  
38

39 We urge close monitoring of the implementation of the Organic Foods Production Act to protect the  
40 interests of family farmers and consumers and the integrity of the Act.  
41

42 We urge the USDA National Organic Program to adhere to the intent and integrity of the national organic  
43 standards, and that the National Organic Standards Board continues to have full authority over materials  
44 allowed or prohibited in organic production and handling.  
45

1 We urge the USDA National Organic Program to consider financial and technical support programs for  
2 producers transitioning land into certified organic production going through the three-year transition  
3 requirement.

4  
5 We support efforts to develop uniform national definitions and standards for any food that is labeled  
6 “natural” or “regenerative”.

7  
8 We support the USDA National Organic Program addressing issues between food safety requirements and  
9 encouraging producers to protect pollinator and wildlife species and habitat corridors next to organic  
10 production.

### 11 **C. Urban Agriculture**

12 We acknowledge and support the integration and expansion of for-profit and non-profit agriculture in urban,  
13 peri-urban, and open spaces, and in parks settings.

14  
15 We support urban agricultural operations educating and informing consumers about local and regional  
16 agricultural production.

17  
18 We support municipalities adopting comprehensive rules to enable agriculture production inside city limits  
19 (e.g., zoning permitting and ag vehicle licensing).

20  
21 We support adding agriculture as a permitted use in all types of zoning.

22  
23 We support the classification of high tunnels as temporary as opposed to permanent structures regarding  
24 municipal codes.

25  
26 We support the classification of ancillary structures in urban and peri-urban municipalities as an agricultural  
27 application as opposed to commercial, industrial, or residential including animal housing, shade, storage,  
28 fencing, and cold storage.

29  
30 We support classifying the use of controlled growing environments (greenhouses and hoop houses/high  
31 tunnels) as an agricultural application, as opposed to commercial or industrial in urban and peri-urban  
32 municipalities.

33  
34 We encourage counties, cities, and municipalities to allow farm stands to operate on principal use sites of  
35 any size, regardless of zoning. Retail sale of goods from farm stands must include items grown or produced  
36 on the principal use site where the farm stand is located.

### 37 **D. Risk Management**

#### 38 **1. Federal Crop Insurance**

39 We support efforts to continually improve the federal crop insurance program that:

- 40 ➤ Recognize federal crop insurance is not an effective substitute for other agricultural safety-net  
41 policies or programs.
- 42 ➤ Do not penalize producers that use nontraditional crops and/or rotations by insuring crops with  
43 increased premiums and lower coverage.
- 44
- 45

- Are consistent with, and complement the goal of improving, short and long-term family farm and ranch economic sustainability.
- Provide equitable and adequate whole farm coverage levels at affordable prices for a broader range of commodities, including fruits, vegetables, and other specialty crops or production techniques and in all geographic regions.
- Effectively cover small, diversified beginning farmers and ranchers and eliminate barriers for them to participate in the program.
- Encourage innovation to develop and improve risk management tools, such as dollar per-acre coverage and revenue products for the livestock and dairy sectors.
- Provide coverage for producers that are diversifying with non-traditional crops not covered by the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for the first three years. The coverage would be for direct input costs only but would not replace retroactive claims after the three-year waiting period.
- Recognize that short-term financial soundness should not be the sole determinant in establishing types of coverage, insurance levels, or rates.
- Eliminate penalties for un-harvested production for all crops.
- Risk Management Agency (RMA) eligibility should consider “Acts of God” prior to requiring compliance of the conservation plan.
- Allow charitable donations or gleaning of non-marketable product without negating coverage or claims.
- Encourage federal crop/livestock insurance premium structure to incentivize adoption of agricultural practices that improve environmental resiliency and streamlining program access to ensure family farmers have equal access to useful, appropriate coverage, including small scale farms.
- Provide coverage for loss of grazing due to drought, wildfire, lack of access, or breach of leasing contract.

We recommend that farmers relying on irrigation not be penalized by being forced to sign up crop acreage as dry land instead of irrigated land due to an “Act of God.”

We recommend coverage based on Actual Production History (APH) where available; for cases without APH, the transitional yield cannot be lower than Farm Service Agency (FSA) County Expected Yields. County Expected Yields should have different quantities for organic production versus conventional and published as such.

We urge the establishment of APH yield floors to protect the producer in the event of successive disasters. This floor cannot be lower than FSA County Expected Yields.

We support crop insurance that makes available up to 100 percent coverage levels.

We urge Congress to maintain the current premium subsidy levels on crop insurance, enabling the program to be an affordable management tool for family farms and family farm corporations.

We urge limiting risk management audits of farm records to seven years of production history, regardless of crop rotation.

1 We urge RMA to expand crops that are covered under crop insurance, and we request RMA reevaluate the  
2 rules and practices of existing covered crops and additional covered crops.

3  
4 We support crop insurance settlements based on cost of production, not Board of Trade prices.

5  
6 We support extension of preventive crop planting coverage annually within over-drafted aquifer systems to  
7 farmers who are actively managing their water resources for both short-term and long-term risk avoidance.

8  
9 We support RMA using weather data where available on a section basis to assess moisture availability  
10 (rainfall and snowmelt) for crop production, when making a determination on preventive crop planting or  
11 crop losses. Risk management rules should not penalize producers for using locally recommended  
12 conservation measures.

13  
14 We support the creation of a new federal risk management insurance pool to provide broad liability  
15 coverage to cooperatives and individuals who wish to market their products directly to consumers.

16  
17 We oppose any surcharge to farming practices after an organic APH is established.

18  
19 We oppose RMA allowing crop insurance premium discounts involving specific crop inputs offered by a  
20 single company.

21  
22 We support cross-state coordination by RMA for required reporting of planting dates within the same  
23 watershed.

## 24 25 **2. Disaster Programs**

26 We support a fully funded permanent disaster assistance program with streamlined FEMA and SBA relief  
27 regarding seasonal needs.

28  
29 We support USDA ad hoc disaster direct payments to landowners in exceptional drought, as we recognize  
30 drought as a natural disaster, as well as the multi-year effects of drought.

31  
32 The USDA, when administering disaster program payments, should reevaluate structure to account for  
33 climate change, with multi-year, streamlined application and sustainability in mind. Resilience should be  
34 invested in, encouraged, and supported given the long-term nature of these weather patterns over the coming  
35 decades.

36  
37 We support measures to prevent predatory real estate transactions in disaster zones.

38  
39 We support streamlining distribution of aid in disaster zones.

## 40 41 **3. Conservation**

42 We support more control in conservation program decisions by locally elected Conservation District Boards  
43 of Supervisors.

44  
45 We support land leases that incentivize conservation practices.

1 We support stacking benefits with regard to conservation and energy programs.

2

3 We encourage flexibility when administering any conservation programs for tribal communities.

4

5 **4. Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) & Conservation Reserve Enhancement**

6 **Program (CREP)**

7 We support flexibility in CRP that reflects local environmental conditions as determined by the local FSA  
8 county committee, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office, and soil and water conservation  
9 districts.

10

11 We endorse the effort to preserve and protect our more fragile farmland, and to restore the health of native  
12 grasslands through best management practices that utilize CRP lands in rotational grazing systems.

13

14 We support the right to rebid the contract for an additional term at the same rate or a rate adjusted for  
15 inflation for landowners and/or operators.

16

17 We support allowing enrollees to manage permanent vegetative cover to enhance wildlife habitat and  
18 ecosystem health.

19

20 We favor managed haying and grazing of CRP stands for maintaining the health of the grass species and  
21 minimizing fire hazard and the spread of designated noxious weeds.

22

23 We support controlling noxious weeds, pests, and undesirable plants on land in CRP.

24

25 We support a complete re-classification of noxious weeds so that it reflects the beneficial use of such plants  
26 to pollinators.

27

28 We support continuation and urge full funding of CREP.

29

30 We support researching the best species and management for reestablishing stands of cover on “de-  
31 irrigated” arid landscapes across the west.

32

33 CREP and CRP standards and management should reflect the desire to maintain and sustain stands of soil  
34 cover.

35

36 **5. Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)**

37 We support CSP as a full, nationwide, and unrestricted program.

38

39 We urge implementation of CSP in a manner that recognizes conservation practices appropriate to different  
40 climatic regions and provides such agricultural production practices to be adequately scored by the  
41 Conservation Management Tool.

42

43 We urge NRCS to make CSP<sub>2</sub> contracting a high priority, and such system should provide accessible,  
44 functional, and yield deliverables linked to ecosystem function.

1                   **6. Cost Share Programs, Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP), Wildlife**  
2                   **Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)**

3 We urge USDA to make every reasonable effort to simplify cost share programs and educate and assist  
4 producers in a timely manner.

5  
6 We support continuation of cost share programs that:

- 7       ➤ Target monies to family-sized operations with payment limitations per contract.
- 8       ➤ Assist in solving natural resource challenges.
- 9       ➤ Aid in assisting agriculture operations to co-exist with wildlife.
- 10      ➤ Assist farmers and ranchers to meet regulatory requirements; and
- 11      ➤ Conserve precious natural resources including soil and water.

12  
13 We support the establishment of a new tiered EQIP funding mechanism specifically designed for small and  
14 beginning farming and ranching operations.

15  
16 We oppose producers being penalized for non-compliance with program requirements resulting from “Acts  
17 of God” such as drought, fire, and floods, extreme heat, excessive cold, wind events, and extreme weather  
18 conditions.

19  
20                   **7. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**

21 We support NRCS as the agency under USDA providing technical support and assistance.

22  
23 Offices must be funded and staffed to ensure full and timely implementation of all programs.

24  
25 We support continuation of NRCS snow surveys and Snow Telemetry (SNOTEL) measuring stations.

26  
27 We support the implementation of technologies to accurately forecast water supplies from snowpack and  
28 runoff, including the continuation and refinement of snow survey and snow telemetry measuring  
29 approaches.

30  
31 We encourage NRCS to train staff and technical service providers to work with young and beginning  
32 farmers and ranchers, USDA defined “Historically Underserved Producers”, and nontraditional farm  
33 enterprises.

34  
35 We urge USDA to establish and enforce performance measures and levels in each NRCS office.

36  
37                   **8. Wool and Mohair Program**

38 We support reinstatement of the original revenue-generating Wool and Mohair Program.

39  
40                   **9. Sugar Program**

41 We support continuation of the Sugar Program.

42  
43 We urge close collaboration with the sugar beet growers associations of CO, NM, and WY.



1                   **10. Honey Loan Program**

2 We support the Honey Loan Program.  
3

4                   **11. Livestock Indemnity Program**

5 Bison should be afforded equitable rate schedules for the Livestock Indemnity Program reimbursement rate  
6 as a stand-alone product based on bison market prices, separate from beef or beefalo.  
7

8 Indemnity should be paid at 100% market value with 25% of funds to be used to mitigate future deaths.  
9

10           **E. Labeling**

11 We believe consumers have the right to know what is in their food, and we support uniform federal labeling  
12 standards for food.  
13

14 We support labeling indicating that water was added during processing.  
15

16 We support education of consumers regarding labeling of foods that contain additives and genetically  
17 modified and engineered organisms.  
18

19 We oppose misleading, inaccurate, and vague label language.  
20

21 We urge agricultural products be labeled accurately, and that agricultural product descriptions serve to  
22 educate and inform the consumer.  
23

24 We urge the development of certifiable and verifiable “Grass-fed” labeling standards that are regulated in a  
25 manner similar to “Organic.”  
26

27 We support reinstatement of, full funding for, and compliance with mandatory Country of Origin Labeling  
28 (mCOOL).  
29

30 All labeling costs associated with determining and marketing foreign country-of-origin products (not born,  
31 raised, and processed in the United States) shall be paid by the importers.  
32

33 In the absence of mCOOL, the same labeling standards outlined in mCOOL should be maintained to benefit  
34 producers and consumers in any voluntary program. Imported food should carry a quality grade label  
35 consistent with domestically produced foods and country-of-origin labels.  
36

37 We support the USDA creating a label to describe USA fiber produced products that are manufactured,  
38 milled, and processed with fiber reared or grown in the USA.  
39

40 We favor clear and mandatory uniform federal labeling standards for Genetically Modified Organisms  
41 (GMOs) in all food and feed. In the absence of a mandatory standard, we support a clear and voluntary  
42 uniform federal standard.  
43

44 We urge any federal definition of genetically engineered material be consistent with the definition of  
45 excluded methods in 7 CFR S 205.2, the National Organic Standards.

1 We support labeling with respect to food additives and irradiation.

2  
3 We support FDA efforts to redefine “healthy” to align with nutrition facts, labeling regulations, and current  
4 evidence-based nutritional science.

5  
6 We encourage the FDA to continually update and evaluate the regulations of the 1958 Food Additives  
7 Amendment to ensure that safe ingredients are permitted to be used in food, and that unsafe ingredients are  
8 prohibited.

9  
10 We support labeling of organic products in accordance with the National Organic Standards Food  
11 Production Act.

12  
13 We support the prosecution of individuals or entities who knowingly sell or import nonorganic products as  
14 certified organic.

15  
16 We urge the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service to amend its regulations to require that all  
17 meat/poultry labeled as “natural” be required to be sourced from animals that were not administered growth  
18 hormones or subtherapeutic antibiotics, and all “natural” products to be third party verified.

19  
20 We support requiring any laboratory-produced product to be labeled as laboratory or industrially produced.

21  
22 We support meat defined as a product derived from the tissue or flesh of animals that have been harvested in  
23 the traditional manner.

24  
25 We oppose labeling alternative protein sources as meat.

26  
27 The rights of both GMO and non-GMO producers should be respected as appropriate regulatory agencies  
28 continue to research and evaluate these concerns. This includes, but is not limited to, required consumer  
29 labeling for foods made from or containing GMOs.

30  
31 We support nuclear magnetic resonance testing on all imported products that are labeled as honey or food  
32 grade oils to ensure purity of product.

33  
34 **F. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)**

35 We urge full funding be appropriated for all USDA agencies and programs, and that all funding  
36 appropriated to USDA and its subordinate agencies be used for its intended purposes and that monies  
37 available for loans to family farms be designated for that purpose.

38  
39 All positions in all divisions within USDA should be fully staffed, and staff administering federal farm  
40 programs should be fully informed and trained before enrollment periods begin.

41  
42 We urge streamlining the application, reporting, and certification processes for federal grants and programs,  
43 and those processes be consistent in all state offices.

44  
45 We support increasing and modernizing outreach and program participation by utilizing multiple  
46 technologies and languages to meet the needs of all farmers and ranchers.

1 We support historically disenfranchised producers and farm owners, especially those without deed or title,  
2 to be eligible for all the loans, benefits, and programs of the USDA and federal government.

3  
4 We urge USDA to support offering intensive language training opportunities for regional technical staff, to  
5 assure historically underserved producers are not further limited access to programs due to language  
6 limitations.

7  
8 We support funding and utilization of USDA Climate Hubs to coordinate resource sharing of climate  
9 information, agronomic and risk management support, and programs that enhance opportunities for family  
10 farmers and ranchers to participate in the ecosystem service market.

11  
12 We support changing the USDA definition of a small business, including meat and poultry processing  
13 businesses, to one of less than 200 employees.

14  
15 We support extending funding for the local meat capacity grant (LocalMCap).

16  
17 We support the creation of a program, similar to the Fair Food Program, assuring a voluntary, collaborative  
18 process between farms and workers on farms to deliver certifiable, market rewarded, and market-enforced  
19 payment on products to benefit wages, profits, and livelihoods of workers and of farmers.

20  
21 We support USDA creating incentives for participation in this program. Programs like these could allow  
22 workers to gain more market share towards wages, accountability of employers for fair standards and  
23 hearing grievances, and buy-in from food product end users to ensure that goods are not purchased at below-  
24 production costs and labor rates.

25  
26 We urge the USDA to designate funds for capacity in regional offices in areas identified under the Justice40  
27 Initiative to better serve socially-disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

28  
29 We urge the USDA across all of its programs to promptly respond to fluctuating prices due to inflation, and,  
30 when necessary, supply chain issues to reflect contemporary economic conditions, current costs, and take  
31 into full account economic forecasts and potential price increases when allocating programmatic funding.

### 32 33 **G. Farm Service Agency (FSA)**

34 We support FSA as the primary agency within the USDA for developing, administering, and dispersing  
35 benefits for agriculture programs and policies toward the goal of providing security for the family farm  
36 system.

37  
38 We oppose downsizing FSA and other USDA agencies as it is detrimental to rural America and the ability  
39 of the agencies to fulfill their mission.

40  
41 We oppose county office consolidation, and we demand each county have full funding, staffing, and training  
42 to provide good service to the agriculture community.

43  
44 We strongly urge continuing and strengthening the state, county, and community committee system for farm  
45 program administration.

1 We urge that program announcement dates be timely regarding cropping seasons for agriculture operations,  
2 and strictly adhered to.

3  
4 We urge FSA loan programs allow cooperative equity stock to serve as collateral for farmer investment in  
5 new cooperatives.

6  
7 We urge FSA to include programs that incentivize and support beginning farmers and ranchers, and small,  
8 diversified agricultural operations.

9  
10 We urge FSA to support farming practices that help improve our soils and promote conservation practices.

11  
12 FSA should always consider preventive plant acres in revenue calculations as it pertains to, but not limited  
13 to, farm safety net programs, risk management programs, and disaster programs.

14  
15 We strongly encourage FSA to digitize its application process into an online format.

16  
17 We urge the USDA to establish and enforce performance measures and levels in each FSA office.

18  
19 We support all FSA county offices reviewing loan applications without the requirement of prior denial of  
20 business plans or producer by a commercial lender.

21  
22 We support all FSA county offices exclude retirement savings smaller than \$500,000 from review and  
23 calculation of loan approval, especially for beginning and underserved farmers and ranchers.

24  
25 We urge FSA to support direct-to-consumer and other similar business structures and their associated  
26 pricing models when evaluating program applications.

## 27 28 **H. Cooperative Financing**

29 We support the expansion and improvement of the Business and Industry Loan Program (BILP) and other  
30 federal sources to assist producers in making equity investments in new cooperatives.

## 31 32 **I. Federal Grading and Inspections**

33 We urge all imported meat and other foods federally inspected under federal health laws to carry an  
34 “imported and inspected” label. All imported foods that do not meet USDA or FDA standards should not be  
35 allowed into the United States.

36  
37 We support inspection of all meats, either domestic, imported, or non-amenable (bison, deer, elk, or other  
38 exotic species), to ensure such products meet all state and USDA regulations and standards.

39  
40 We strongly support hiring additional USDA inspectors to conduct these required inspections. The USDA  
41 grading and inspection services necessary for food quality and safety should be tailored to meet the needs of  
42 individuals and cooperatives. There should be no charge for these services.

43  
44 We support a program allowing the hiring of local veterinarians to serve as USDA inspectors in rural areas.  
45

1 We urge continued federal funding of the meat-grading program and oppose any privatization of meat-  
2 inspection services.

3  
4 We support marketing of state-inspected meats from current state-licensed and inspected plants across state  
5 lines to individuals, retailers, or food service outlets, when state meat inspections meet or surpass federal  
6 regulations.

7  
8 We support the scaling of USDA meat inspection services to reflect risk and the volume of product  
9 produced.

10  
11 We urge USDA to establish simplified and minimal paperwork and record keeping requirements for small  
12 USDA inspected meat packing plants.

13  
14 We urge that an independent commission be established where small plants can appeal directives from the  
15 inspection and compliance division of the USDA meat inspection service and timely resolution of issues.

16  
17 We support standardizing the federal laws to determine moisture content allowance of all meat products.

18  
19 We support mandatory recall authority for FDA and USDA.

20  
21 We oppose assessing any user fees or overtime charges for federal meat inspection services, including  
22 inspection of non-amenable species.

23  
24 **J. Agricultural Labor and Immigration**

25 The National Labor Relations Act should be extended to workers on all farms which employ enough hired  
26 help to be subject to the federal minimum wage provisions applicable to agricultural workers.

27  
28 We support agricultural labor standards including:

- 29 ○ Worker protection standards regarding wage rates, health, safety, and housing conditions for  
30 migrant, seasonal, minority and other farm laborers and for education of their children; and
- 31
- 32 ○ A right to organize and protect whistleblowers and organizers; and
- 33
- 34 ○ A livable wage tied to the cost of living in the region including all compensation; and
- 35
- 36 ○ Overtime wage standards that reflect the seasonality of agricultural production, the  
37 economics of family farm and ranch operations, and the needs of agricultural workers.
- 38

39 We support providing training and tools to minimize the risk of injury at the workplace.

40  
41 We support practicable federal heat stress standards.

42  
43 We support a fair process for agricultural employers and employees to resolve conflict.

1 We support employees having access to service providers and medical care during non-work hours, or  
2 during a shift if there is an emergency, while ensuring landowners can keep visitors safe and protect their  
3 operations.

4  
5 We oppose oligopolies, price fixing, unfair trade agreements and practices, consolidations, anticompetitive  
6 behavior and practices including kickbacks, volume discounts and any other practice that has the effect of  
7 limiting competition and cheap food policies which harm farmers and farm workers.

8  
9 We support efforts to assure fairness for all involved in the production of food.

10  
11 We urge Congress to work on reforming and enforcing immigration law in the interest of homeland  
12 security, rural economies, and labor needs in agriculture.

13  
14 We urge Congress to include a pathway to citizenship for agricultural workers as part of comprehensive  
15 immigration reform.

16  
17 We encourage any people seeking permanent residence in the United States to apply for citizenship with all  
18 the rights and responsibilities that accompany citizenship.

19  
20 We urge a comprehensive overhaul of immigration policy that provides a sensible path forward for  
21 immigrants who are here without legal status and are committed to becoming fully participating members of  
22 our society.

23  
24 We urge the adoption of federal immigration legislation with an agricultural worker program that provides  
25 work authorization for experienced and consistent farm labor force, with visas of adequate length and  
26 flexibility to meet the diverse needs of agriculture and the security needs of the United States.

27  
28 We oppose the adoption of a mandatory E-Verify program without the inclusion of a workable agricultural  
29 worker program.

30  
31 We support programs such as ALBA (Agriculture and Land Based Training Association) for career path and  
32 progression for documented immigrant farm laborers.

33  
34 We support federal Ag JOBS legislation which provides access to a consistent, legal supply of seasonal  
35 workers to meet the needs of agriculture.

36  
37 We urge expediting and streamlining the process to allow approved immigrant workers to travel back and  
38 forth from their home country.

39  
40 We urge OSHA to use its full authority to protect workers' rights in food processing from known safety  
41 hazards, harmful work environments, and ensure whistleblower protection.

42  
43 We urge OSHA to strengthen standards and enforcement affecting agricultural workers living in employer-  
44 provided housing to specifically address the challenges of public health and safety emergencies.

1 We urge streamlining the regulatory process or replacing the H-2A program with a guest worker program  
2 that serves the needs of family farmers, ranchers, and guest workers.

3  
4 We support any upcoming legislation, in line with this policy, that seeks to remedy the farm labor crisis.

5  
6 We will work towards the reform of the H-2A program to better align with farmers' needs.

7  
8 We will work with policymakers to create policies to control the growth of the Adverse Effect Wage Rate  
9 (AEWR).

10  
11 We will continue to support alternative programs, like the mobile workforce program, to help find  
12 alternative labor solutions.

13  
14 We support efforts to assure fairness for all involved in the production of food nationwide. We recognize  
15 that oligopolies, fixing prices, and cheap food policy harm farmers and farm workers.

16  
17 We support the USDA creating training and informational videos and materials for the education of ag  
18 workers in all languages that producers/workers may require, to aid producers in obtaining/providing  
19 required information.

#### 20 21 **K. Federal School Meals Programs**

22 We urge the government to mandate the purchase of domestically produced agricultural products for use in  
23 school meals programs, prioritizing and incentivizing locally produced food where possible.

24  
25 We support the federal government subsidizing the milk program for all nutrition programs.

26  
27 We support the sourcing of food for school and juvenile detention center meal programs from school  
28 gardens and farms.

29  
30 We urge the USDA to administratively and financially support a school meal program at the federal level  
31 that provides flexibility and reduces federal regulations while encouraging a healthy diet, the use of local  
32 foods, and local food preparation; and to provide our country's children with the highest quality food and  
33 farm products rather than the cheapest.

34  
35 We support the Geographic Preference rules for school meal programs to financially encourage the purchase  
36 and use of local farm products, and to allow "local" as a specification in the procurement bidding process.

37  
38 We support the allowance of the word "local" as a descriptor of a desired commodity in the school nutrition  
39 procurement process.

40  
41 We encourage Congress to fund, strengthen, and expand Farm to School and other institution programs.

42  
43 We support expansion of the USDA Farm to School Grant Program to include preschools, summer food  
44 service program sites, before and after school programs, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program  
45 (CACFP).

1 We encourage Farm to School partnerships to increase consumption of nutritious and/or traditional foods  
2 while also supporting farmers and ranchers.

3  
4 We encourage the use of Standard Administrative Expenses (SAE) funding to support farm to school  
5 programs.

6  
7 We urge the reauthorization of the Child Nutrition Act and oppose block grant funding of the Act.

8  
9 We support flexibility regarding the safe distribution and reimbursement of meals for qualifying students,  
10 even when schools are closed due to emergencies.

11  
12 We support full funding of the federal school meal programs to provide free school meals to all public  
13 school students.

#### 14 15 **L. Federal Public Lands**

16 We support full funding of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and United States Forest Service  
17 (USFS) to allow for proper management and regulation of our federal lands, including such items as:

- 18 ➤ Programs to mitigate potential wildfires in urban and forest interface corridors, including rural  
19 private lands adjacent to state and federal forests.
- 20 ➤ Management and control of the transportation of insect-infested and diseased wood and fuel wood to  
21 prevent spreading the insects to healthy and uninfected tree populations.
- 22 ➤ The use of the Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) for logging transportation subsidies to  
23 help expedite and facilitate the movement of diseased wood.
- 24 ➤ Assistance to logging contractors through educational programs and software products, including  
25 software development, to minimize existing transportation inconsistencies; and
- 26 ➤ Meaningful education programs for the public concerning overall forest health.

#### 27 28 **1. Management of Lands**

29 We support a workable plan whereby our federal lands are sustained in a responsible manner using multiple-  
30 use management and with quality stewardship. Federal contracts, permits, leases, and easements shall be  
31 monitored and enforced, and if found to be out of compliance continuously, the leases should be terminated.

32  
33 We support the expansion and utilization of BLM Resource Advisory Councils (RACs) in order to provide  
34 local input into land management decisions.

35  
36 We support having lessee input into decisions in public land access.

37  
38 We support public access on public land being addressed on a lease-by-lease basis to ensure appropriate  
39 access for the use.

40 Public access to these lands shall only be on designated routes.

41  
42 Travel Management Plans associated with public lands for designated routes must include input from  
43 adjacent landowners, permittees, and any other appropriate private and public stakeholders.

44  
45 Lessee/lessor access is needed for year-round multiple-use management.



1 The ecological impact created by recreational activities must be considered in these plans.

2  
3 We strongly urge federal land managers (USFS, BLM, NPS, etc.) to prioritize the health and resiliency of  
4 forest lands and wilderness through management practices that will increase carbon sequestration and other  
5 ecosystem services and will prevent extreme wildfire events, ecosystem collapse, watershed damage, and  
6 erosion.

7  
8 We support grazing allotment holders to be compensated for ecological services on public lands.

9  
10 We support the continuation and expansion of local Forest Service and BLM Offices, and we oppose the  
11 consolidation or further closures and vacating of local Forest Service and BLM Offices.

12  
13 We support livestock grazing as a management tool in maintaining the health of these resources.

14  
15 We support management of grazing on federal lands based on scientific data and monitoring of individual  
16 allotments and encourage increased funding for this research.

17  
18 Grazing allotments should be restricted to family farms and family farm entities.

19  
20 We support flexibility in grazing allotment regulations to allow for the viability of family farms and ranches  
21 and family farm and ranch entities and for them to respond to erratic weather.

22  
23 We support incentivized and collaborative active management of public land.

24  
25 We support federal laws currently banning any public entity (including municipalities and nongovernmental  
26 organizations) from owning or leasing federal grazing allotments.

27  
28 We support establishing user fees for both consumptive and non-consumptive use of public lands.

29  
30 We urge federal grazing fees continue to be set by the Public Rangeland Improvement Act (PRIA) formula  
31 and increases shall not exceed the annual rate of inflation.

32  
33 We support keeping local grazing committees intact to handle grazing allotments, management issues, and  
34 disputes.

35  
36 We support efforts to establish native grass banks and pollinator-friendly plants on public lands.

37  
38 We support the formation of locally owned cooperatives and businesses to harvest and process forest  
39 products.

40  
41 We oppose regulations that mandate the removal of a permittee's livestock during an administrative appeal  
42 process.

43  
44 We oppose governmental agencies taking and disposing of private property, including livestock, prior to  
45 being heard in the courts, a judgment being rendered, and with appeals exhausted.

1 We oppose allowing non-grazers to bid up the price of an allotment thus denying access to farmers and  
2 ranchers.

3  
4 We oppose separating water from existing leases.

5  
6 We oppose the efforts of the U.S. Forest Service and BLM to reduce or eliminate domestic sheep grazing  
7 from federal lands.

8  
9 We support evaluation of wages of federal employees to ensure public land offices are fully staffed.

10  
11 We support relevant federal agencies and departments give public notice, explanation, and accept comments  
12 on all grazing permit retirements and transfers.

## 13 14 **2. Forest Health**

15 We urge federal forest management plans be updated to address forest health issues with actions such as the  
16 reinstatement of Categorical Exclusion for the USFS to use as a tool to expedite and accelerate the harvest  
17 of small timber stands in Western United States forests.

18  
19 We support appropriate and full compensation for those harmed by loss of control of management practices,  
20 whether by mismanagement or “Acts of God”.

21  
22 We urge federal and state forests be accessible to the renewable energy industry to allow harvesting of  
23 devastated wood products for use in environmentally beneficial value-added products to improve the health  
24 of our forests.

25  
26 We support implementation and full funding of efforts to minimize the effects of insect epidemics on  
27 national and state forests throughout the Western United States. Federal, state, and private programs must be  
28 approved immediately to protect open space, wildlife habitat, watersheds, clean air, and other natural  
29 resources as well as infrastructure such as roads and utility lines.

## 30 31 **3. Wild Horse and Burro Population**

32 BLM must follow through with required annual surveys and management plans to control wild horse and  
33 burro populations to minimize damage to private and public lands.

34  
35 We urge continued study and reasonable use of lethal and non-lethal methods in addition to the use of  
36 sterilization techniques to help control population.

37  
38 We support the harvest of excess feral horses and burros for consumption.

39  
40 We oppose the portion of the Safeguard American Food Exports Act of 2017 which denies horse meat  
41 consumption.

42  
43 We support horse meat consumption that meets the same USDA health and safety standards already in place  
44 for other livestock meats such as beef, pork, or lamb.

1 We support the USDA-inspected horse and burro adoption program.

2  
3 We oppose the release of non-adopted animals onto public lands.

4  
5 We recommend that captured horses placed in government supported holding facilities be limited to five  
6 years of captivity.

7  
8 **M. Commodity Check-off Programs**

9 We support research, promotion, and education programs financed by voluntary contributions by producers  
10 of agricultural commodities, only if all the following criteria are met:

- 11 ➤ Disbursement of funds collected, and operations of the program are controlled by boards of  
12 producers elected by the producers assessed.
- 13 ➤ Approval is by most producers voting on the referendum by mail, with spouses allowed to vote  
14 individually.
- 15 ➤ Programs being formulated or currently in operation be subject to a five-year Congressional sunset  
16 review.
- 17 ➤ Collection on sales will have a provision for refund.
- 18 ➤ Penalties should be assessed against those who use funds for political or lobbying activities.
- 19 ➤ Major and significant changes in existing check-off programs should be submitted to the producers  
20 affected and subject to approval by a two-thirds vote.
- 21 ➤ After a federal check-off program is in effect, all review referenda should be financed and conducted  
22 by the federal government.
- 23 ➤ Whenever a commodity check-off is assessed on American producers, the same fee should be  
24 assessed on imports of that commodity with no refund allowed. Importers and/or non-producers  
25 should not be entitled to voting representation.

26  
27 We call for a full Congressional investigation of federally sanctioned commodity check-off programs and  
28 for Congress to issue a public report on their effectiveness, including a complete, transparent accounting of  
29 all funds collected and disbursed. As part of this review, we request Congress hold public hearings  
30 throughout the nation to allow producers an opportunity to participate.

31  
32 Any producer who pays into the check-off programs shall have access to financial audits.

33  
34 We oppose mandatory commodity check-off programs other than those periodically approved by producer  
35 vote.

36  
37 **N. Rural Utilities Service (RUS)**

38 We support rural utility cooperatives and oppose their privatization.

39  
40 We encourage Congress to keep the RUS Revolving Fund intact.

41  
42 We urge that Congress grant rural utility cooperatives territorial protection.

1 We encourage RUS and we direct Rural Electric Associations (REAs) and their generation and transmission  
2 providers to expand their portfolio to include both centralized and distributed clean energy production,  
3 energy efficiencies, and demand-side management.

#### 4 5 **O. Regulatory Agencies**

6 We urge Congress to fund regulatory agencies to allow full staffing to properly function.

7  
8 We urge review of Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) policies on agricultural chemicals to ease the  
9 financial and regulatory burden upon agricultural producers without compromising adequate worker safety  
10 standards.

11  
12 We urge Congress to fund EPA to allow full staffing to address the backlog of review requests.

13  
14 We urge EPA to prioritize review of, and to give reasonable pricing to inherently low risk chemicals,  
15 substances, and biorational pest control methods.

16  
17 We recommend federal resource management agencies work together to form a single definition for  
18 wetlands and riparian zones.

19  
20 We oppose regulatory actions that infringe on private property rights and do not provide compensation for  
21 affected landowners.

22  
23 We urge compliance with and enforcement of current anti-pollution laws.

24  
25 We urge the EPA to regulate aromatics under the Clean Air Act and encourage their replacement with  
26 domestically grown advanced biofuels.

#### 27 28 **P. Food Security and Nutrition Programs**

29 We oppose separating nutrition title programs from the Farm Bill.

30  
31 We support continuation and expanded funding of the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) Farmers Market  
32 Nutrition Program (FMNP) and Senior FMNP including expanded program and administrative funding for  
33 all states, territories, and tribal nations.

34  
35 We support purchases of local meats and eggs for the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) Farmers Market  
36 Nutrition Program (FMNP) and Senior FMNP.

37  
38 We support incentive programs such as Double-Up Food Bucks, that doubles the value of Supplemental  
39 Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) purchases for local fruits, vegetables, local meats, dairy, eggs, and  
40 grains and the use of delivery service do not exclude these programs.

41  
42 We support reauthorization and full funding of all federal nutrition programs.

43  
44 We support continuation of the SNAP Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) program and expansion of the  
45 program to include farmers' markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs).

1  
2 We support the USDA allowing online SNAP benefits purchases wherever eligible retail online food is sold.

3  
4 We support education of the elderly about the EBT program.

5  
6 We support gleaning bills that enable farmers to donate produce to organizations for distribution to the  
7 needy and the poor and to take a tax credit for such donations.

8  
9 We support food education programs and local food nutrition trainings.

10  
11 We support transparent supply chains and local and regional food procurement for domestic hunger relief.

12  
13 We strongly oppose any disproportionate cuts to the Food and Nutrition Title that change the structure of  
14 food assistance in a way that decreases benefits or changes eligibility and qualifications.

15  
16 We urge Congress to improve food assistance programs by including more education on health, nutrition,  
17 and family budgeting, controlling costs, and eliminating junk food and sugar sweetened drinks from  
18 nutritional funding.

19  
20 We support the allocation of national resources to alleviate “food deserts,” as defined by USDA, by  
21 increasing accessibility to a comprehensive range of nutritious foods.

22  
23 We urge Congress to create and fund a national food pantry assistance program that funds technical  
24 assistance and the purchase of local foods direct from the producers for use by food banks.

25  
26 We support the expansion of federal initiatives to facilitate the ability of tribal food producers and  
27 processors to supply federal food distribution programs in tribal nations.

28  
29 **Q. Local Agricultural Advisory Committees.**

30 We support the establishment of Local Agricultural Advisory Committees comprised of residents and  
31 citizens who are involved in agricultural production and agribusiness to advise local governments on all  
32 matters relating to agriculture in their jurisdictions.

33  
34 **Article II. Agricultural Technology**

35 **A. Research and Development into Alternative Crops and Production Methods**

36 We support and encourage long-term research and development on small and large-scale plots and  
37 advancement in production methods focused on soil health and production, including but not limited to  
38 cover crops and reduced tillage in the various production methods.

39  
40 We support and encourage research and development of alternative crops that are less water intensive and  
41 drought, pest, and disease resistant.

42 We support and encourage research and development of perennial crops, including cereal grains such as  
43 Kernza.

44  
45 We support alternatives to energy and chemical intensive methods of production.

1 We urge Congress and the USDA to re-commit and fully fund research into alternative crops and methods  
2 and uses for crops at all USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS) centers.

3  
4 We support increasing public funding for independent research to benefit all producers. This research  
5 should be produced by the USDA, universities, and community colleges.

6  
7 We support full disclosure of all funding sources for those conducting research.

8  
9 We support the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices that enhance environmental quality; make the  
10 most efficient use of nonrenewable resources and on-farm resources; sustain the economic viability of  
11 agriculture operations; enhance the quality of life for farmers, ranchers, and society; and where appropriate,  
12 integrate natural biological cycles and controls to protect the resource base on which agriculture depends.

### 13 14 **B. New Agricultural Production Technologies/Genetically Modified Organisms**

15 We support the use of the term “GMO” to refer to plants and organisms which have been modified at the  
16 genomic level through genetic manipulation such as splicing or recombination, and foods and feed that  
17 contain these ingredients.

18 We support the rights of both GMO and non-GMO producers as appropriate regulatory agencies continue to  
19 research and evaluate ethical, environmental, and food safety concerns, including but not limited, to  
20 required consumer labeling for foods made from or containing GMOs.

21  
22 We urge open dialogue, cooperation, and understanding in trade negotiations relating to GMOs and  
23 biotechnology.

24  
25 We oppose the introduction or use of GMOs as pharmaceuticals until independent scientific research proves  
26 that they are safe both ecologically and for human and animal consumption.

### 27 28 **C. Other Agricultural Production Techniques**

29 We oppose the introduction of products made from cloned animals.

30  
31 We oppose the prosecution of farmers who unknowingly plant proprietary organisms on their own land for  
32 their own purposes.

33  
34 We support legislation like the Hatch-Waxman Act of 1984, which encouraged true, generic competition in  
35 off-patent drugs, and to encourage and allow the development and use of off-patent crop protection  
36 chemicals.

37  
38 We oppose the use of Bovine Growth Hormone (BGH) (BST).

39  
40 We oppose the use of imported milk protein concentrate (casein).

41  
42 We oppose culturing meat in a laboratory for industrial production of food.

43  
44 We recommend increasing public funding for agricultural research to ensure scientific rigor and impartiality  
45 of findings.

1 We urge land grant universities establish multi-state templates for less formal and much faster field trials.

2  
3 We support public accessibility to production methods and equipment developed with public funding.

4  
5 **D. Agricultural Structures**

6 We support the use of controlled growing environments as an agricultural application, as opposed to  
7 commercial or industrial

8  
9 We recognize controlled growing environments to include permanent or temporary greenhouses and hoop  
10 houses.

11  
12 We support ancillary structures as an agricultural application, as opposed to commercial, industrial, or  
13 residential, including animal housing, shade, storage, fencing, and cold storage.

14  
15 We support public occupancy to agricultural utility buildings, without the requirement of meeting  
16 commercial building standards, especially in the context of retail farm stands and stores.

17  
18 **E. Bees and Pollinators**

19 We support beekeeping and honey production as an agricultural operation.

20  
21 We support research on solutions to the causes of pollinator loss.

22  
23 We acknowledge the results of research indicating that multiple factors contribute to the decline in  
24 pollinators, including pesticides, habitat loss, pathogens, parasites, and climate change.

25  
26 We encourage action to support the health of bees and other pollinators.

27  
28 We urge USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) to make recommendations for the  
29 health and protection of pollinators, with enforcement and research dating back to 2009.

30  
31 We urge EPA to include “lethal” criteria and “chronic injury, weakness or disease” criteria for pesticides  
32 labels.

33  
34 We urge the USDA to provide education on agricultural practices that have harmful and devastating effects  
35 on pollinator population.

36  
37 We urge the EPA’s office of Pesticide Programs to adopt reforms to ensure that pesticide approvals and use  
38 decisions are science-based to protect pollinator and human health.

39  
40 **F. Small Business Development Authority**

41 We support the concept of a small business development authority that would allow tax incentives for the  
42 development of new technology and innovative uses of agricultural products.

43  
44 We support defining a small business as one having less than 200 employees.

1           **G. Genetic Ownership**

2 We support legislation exempting farmers and ranchers from payment of royalties on offspring of patented  
3 animals and plants.

4  
5 We support legislation to put the liability incurred from unwanted propagation of GMO traits on the patent  
6 owner, and we support indemnification for the contamination of non-GMO/identity-preserved crops by  
7 GMO patent holders.

8  
9 We support legislation to prohibit the patenting of heritage genetic material.

10  
11 We support the right of farmers to plant seed derived from proprietary organisms on their own land.

12  
13 We oppose the patenting of plants and animals.

14  
15 We support establishing and maintaining foundation seed banks.

16  
17 We support all cultivars developed with public funds and protection of the rights of farmers to save seeds  
18 and breeders to share and improve such germplasm and breeds.

19  
20 We support all publicly funded cultivars be immediately available for breeders.

21  
22           **H. Unmanned Aerial Systems**

23 We support the use of Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS – or “drones”) as a management tool in agricultural  
24 operations.

25  
26           **I. Livestock Health**

27 We urge USDA APHIS and other research organizations actively pursue research to clearly establish  
28 transmission modes, preventive measures including vaccination, and a protocol for vesicular stomatitis

29  
30 We request quarantine restrictions be periodically reevaluated.

31  
32 We support the authority of USDA to control animal movement in the event of an animal disease outbreak.

33  
34 We support all cattle entering the United States from foreign soil be tested for diseases and that those testing  
35 positive for any disease should be handled according to established protocol regarding quarantine and/or  
36 impounded at the expense of the importer.

37  
38 We request APHIS provide necessary resources to control and prevent disease spread in outbreak situations  
39 in consultation with affected state livestock health professionals.

40  
41 We support incentives for veterinarians who agree to serve underserved areas.

42  
43 We urge all federal and state agencies entrusted with wildlife management also be mandated to implement a  
44 comprehensive management plan to eradicate brucellosis and chronic wasting disease from all wildlife  
45 under their control.



1 We require full market value compensation for domestically raised game and other livestock destroyed by  
2 the government on private and commercial ranches.

3  
4 We oppose the prophylactic use of antibiotics in livestock.

5  
6 We oppose the importation of ruminant animals and products from any country that does not have an  
7 enforceable ban on animal by-products used in feed for ruminant animals that meets USDA standards.

8  
9 We oppose moving acute use veterinary antibiotics to prescription use only.

10  
11 We oppose the importation of livestock or livestock products from countries with endemic reportable  
12 diseases.

### 13 14 **J. Animal Identification and Livestock Traceability**

15 We support workable methods of monitoring livestock diseases and safeguarding animal health.

16  
17 We oppose any national animal ID program that results in a shift from disease control to monitoring disease  
18 through traceability.

19  
20 We oppose any mandatory animal identification program designed to force livestock producers to register  
21 their premises through 4-H, FFA, or fair programs.

22  
23 We oppose any premise registration and electronic or biometric identification program that

- 24 ➤ Is mandatory.
- 25 ➤ Establishes another level of regulation and an expensive requirement for registering premises and/or
- 26 animals.
- 27 ➤ Interferes with producers' privacy and proprietary information; or
- 28 ➤ Has the potential to undermine market opportunities.

29  
30 We urge all states to have an acceptable form of identification for producers who move cattle inter-state  
31 under the Animal Disease Traceability Program.

### 32 33 **K. Telecommunications**

34 We support the efforts of RUS to provide rural broadband services to their members.

35  
36 We support enhanced 911 emergency telephone services in rural areas.

37  
38 We support competitively priced high-speed Internet access in rural communities to create jobs, to support  
39 health care, education, and rural economic development, and to access government services.

40  
41 We support municipal high-speed Internet where markets fail to provide competitive, high-speed options.

42  
43 We support the continuation of those media programs that meet the needs of the agricultural community.

1           **L. Ag Data**

2 Agriculture data collected by organizations, companies, and educational institutions and other entities  
3 should not be used, monetized, or distributed without the permission of those producers from whom the data  
4 are gathered.

5  
6 We support policies that create clear terms within data license agreements and standardized data protection  
7 practices between tech providers and agricultural producers.

8  
9 We support strong interoperability portability rights and owner access on a real-time basis.

10  
11 We urge federal regulatory agencies to develop and enforce non-compliance fines for agriculture tech  
12 providers and other penalties including data processing suspension.

13  
14 We support federal automated auditing procedures to ensure ethical and responsible access and use of data  
15 throughout the value chain.

16  
17           **M. Right to Repair**

18 We support Fair Repair and Right to Repair legislation that would allow farmers and independent  
19 mechanics access to diagnostic software, information, and other tools to repair modern equipment.

20  
21 We support the development of a universal diagnostic system for agricultural equipment similar to OBD2.

22  
23 **Article III. Competition and Concentration**

24           **A. Industrial Corporate Farming**

25 An “Industrial Corporate Farm” is any corporate entity, not including Family Farms as defined by the  
26 RMFU Policy Manual Preamble, engaged in agricultural production or agribusiness sales for the primary  
27 fiscal or tax benefit of shareholders.

28  
29 We support the prohibition of farming by industrial corporate farms and by foreign owners.

30  
31 We support the strengthening and enforcement of antitrust laws.

32  
33 We oppose the vertical integration and consolidation of production and processing by industrial corporate  
34 farms through mergers and acquisitions.

35  
36 We oppose packer ownership of animals, except family farm-owned packing operations.

37  
38 We oppose multinational grain and food conglomeration.

39  
40 We oppose centralization of food production systems that endanger food security.

41  
42           **B. Infrastructure Ownership**

43 We oppose foreign ownership or control of any infrastructure, including but not limited to highways,  
44 airlines, railroads, public or private utilities (such as water systems and communications systems), and  
45 energy production.

1 **Article IV. International Relations & Trade**

2 **A. Trade Policy**

3  
4 **1. Foreign Policy**

5 All imported agricultural commodities, food, feed, and fiber must receive the same degree of inspection as  
6 those produced in the U.S. and meet the same health and safety standards and regulations.

7  
8 We support a U.S. trade policy that encourages a positive trade balance.

9  
10 We support holding those who import/export prohibited animal products accountable, revoking their  
11 import/export license, prosecuting them to the full extent of the law, and holding them financially  
12 accountable for the market losses of producers.

13  
14 We support legislation that would prohibit the export of pesticides not registered for food and fiber uses in  
15 the U.S. for food and fiber uses in other countries.

16  
17 We strongly request the USDA work to expand foreign markets for any domestically produced farm and  
18 ranch commodities.

19  
20 We support the following provisions to improve international food assistance:

- 21 ➤ Food and development aid should be assured for those here and abroad who are poor, and those  
22 endangered by natural disasters and famine, to assure their survival and well-being.
- 23 ➤ Food should be distributed once it reaches the intended destination.
- 24 ➤ There should be no tolerance for donors using poverty-stricken nations as a dumping ground for  
25 unsafe commodities.
- 26 ➤ Food as crisis relief cannot be used as a means to cause uncompensated harm to family farmers local  
27 to regions in a crisis.

28  
29 We support food assistance programs operating in cooperation with hunger and agricultural organizations  
30 supporting economic development opportunities for people in less-developed countries.

31  
32 We support the removal of lead-containing metals used in the processing or storage of all imported foods.

33  
34 We oppose trade agreements that override the sovereign authority of any nation and fail to address currency  
35 manipulation.

36  
37 We urge the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to appoint active producers to the USDA agricultural trade  
38 advisory committees and that the department reimburse the cost of travel and lodging to attend committee  
39 meetings.

40  
41 We strongly support increased funding in the Farm Bill to better protect the domestic organic market from  
42 fraudulent imported agricultural products.

43  
44 We oppose the use of embargos, sanctions, and tariffs for political purposes that are detrimental to family  
45 farmers.

1 We oppose exporters/importers adding foreign materials to grains, and any intentional contamination of  
2 food products must be responded to with full enforcement of the law.

3  
4 We urge Congress and especially USDA and other agencies of the federal government immediately stop  
5 their unilateral support of free trade agreements that benefit multinational corporations and destroy our  
6 nation’s food independence and sovereignty.

7  
8 We support the food sovereignty of all nations.

9  
10 We oppose the dumping of foreign agricultural products into the United States.

## 11 **2. Long-term Trade Agreements**

12  
13 We support the inclusion of the following goals, objectives, and provisions in our domestic trade policy and  
14 in trade negotiations and agreements:

- 15 ➤ Establish trade agreements that address the causes of and need for trade distorting practices, e.g.,  
16 domestic food safety and security, inadequate economic returns to producers resulting from market  
17 failure, lack of market competition, and an imbalance in supply and demand.
- 18 ➤ Ensure global food security and safety, including the elimination of unilateral sanctions on  
19 agricultural and medical products.
- 20 ➤ Enhance family farmer returns, economic development and individual standards of living.
- 21 ➤ Acknowledge and accommodate the non-market costs/benefits and resource sustainability of  
22 agriculture.
- 23 ➤ Create an agriculture trade environment that encourages increased and transparent market  
24 competition, limits the concentration of market power, and coordinates public competition policy to  
25 ensure the efficient and appropriate allocation of resources within all agricultural sectors to benefit  
26 family farmers.

27  
28 We urge trade negotiators develop an inclusive methodology for measuring impact of domestic support  
29 programs, including effective subsidies conveyed through monetary, policy, labor, and environmental  
30 regulations.

31  
32 We urge establishment of trade agreements that verify all participating countries have a history of  
33 compliance with international laws on human rights.

34  
35 We support the normalization of trade with other countries through the establishment of a fair-trade  
36 agreement that requires other countries to meet labor, production, inspection, environmental standards of the  
37 United States, and forbids manipulation of their currency.

38  
39 We call upon Congress to review and evaluate all existing trade agreements regarding achieving an increase  
40 in commodity and livestock prices and increasing transparent and public competition in all market sectors of  
41 agriculture. If improvements cannot be documented, Congress is encouraged to take corrective actions,  
42 including repealing trade agreements.

43  
44 We believe Congress should use its full opportunity to review and amend provisions of a trade agreement  
45 because fast-track trade authority could easily sweep the concerns of agriculture aside.

1 We oppose the Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS).

2  
3 We oppose the exploitation of developing countries by forcing them to abandon domestic food production  
4 and security.

5  
6 We oppose fast-track trade authority as well as the Trade Promotion Authority for the President of the  
7 United States.

8  
9 We oppose the fast-track system of ratification of trade agreements in which the entire trade package must  
10 be approved without amendment or rejected in total by Congress within a 60-day limit.

## 11 **B. International Relations**

### 12 **1. United Nations**

13  
14 We urge the United States government continue its support of the United Nations, with other nations  
15 providing their proportional share.

### 16 **2. Agricultural Democracy**

17  
18 We support progressive, nonviolent movements, such as the World Farmers Organization, and non-  
19 governmental organizations committed to agricultural justice for all people of this nation and the world.

### 20 **3. World Food**

21  
22 We recommend that America continue its leadership role in providing food reserves to help in times of  
23 famine and natural disaster, with the cost being shared by all developed countries.

24  
25 We support programs that distribute and assure delivery of food and resources to the needy in ways that do  
26 not harm family farmers in those same regions.

### 27 **4. Basic Climatological Observations**

28  
29 We support the maintenance and continuity of basic environmental observations such as stream gauges,  
30 weather stations, and satellite observations of weather, water, and other conditions.

### 31 **5. Paris Climate Accord**

32  
33 We support the goals articulated in the Paris Climate Accord.

## 34 **Article V. Credit**

### 35 **A. Farm Credit System (FCS)**

36  
37 We support a strong cooperatively owned Farm Credit system.

38  
39 We oppose the purchase of any FCS bank or portion of the FCS banking system by any non-FCS entity.

40  
41 We oppose allowing FCS banks to sever mineral rights on property foreclosed upon and subsequently sold.

1 **Article VI. Cooperatives**

2 **A. Cooperatives**

3 We support member-owned cooperatives as an effective institution through which members can reduce  
4 costs of production, maintain a reliable source of inputs, and effectively market and process their products.  
5

6 We support the basic Rochdale Cooperative principles, the one person, one vote principle, and urge Farmers  
7 Union members and organizations to provide leadership in patronage, philosophy, and operation of  
8 cooperatives. It is the individual responsibility of each Farmers Union member to be a full participant and  
9 patron in the cooperative movement and to build a closer relationship between the farm organization and  
10 cooperatives.

11  
12 We support concerted efforts to form specialized cooperatives that allow farmers to sell locally grown  
13 products and locally made value-added products directly to consumers.

14  
15 We support strengthening agricultural cooperatives in the American farming system to enable farmers to  
16 achieve greater bargaining power, both in marketing and purchasing.

17  
18 We support consumer food cooperatives that can provide better services through cooperative purchasing by  
19 their members.

20  
21 We recommend cooperative board members, managers, and employees attend training about the philosophy  
22 of cooperatives.

23  
24 We urge cooperatives to set aside a portion of their net proceeds for educational programs.

25  
26 We support the Capper-Volstead Act, passed in 1922, that allows agricultural producers to join  
27 cooperatively to market, package, transport, and buy their products.

28  
29 When developing a new cooperative, we encourage at least one non-agricultural member and one person  
30 with a business background to serve on the board of directors.

31  
32 We urge caution when considering joint ventures between cooperatives and corporations or other entities  
33 not protected under the Capper-Volstead Act.

34  
35 We oppose the double taxation of a cooperative on both total earnings and the producer's share of these  
36 returns as personal income.

37  
38 We strongly encourage the verification of businesses calling themselves cooperatives are in fact bona fide  
39 cooperatives operating under state law.

40  
41 We oppose any federal legislation that would make all cooperative financial paper, including patronage  
42 dividends, subject to the rules, regulations, and jurisdiction of the Federal Securities and Exchange  
43 Commission.

44  
45 We urge that cooperative members consider the long-term consequences of selling their cooperatives for  
46 short-term goals and urge the board oppose the sale of any cooperative venture to agribusiness.

1 **Article VII. Water, Land, and Conservation**

2 **A. Agricultural Land**

3 **1. Ownership**

4 We oppose nonresident foreign and industrial corporate ownership of American farms and real estate.

5  
6 We strongly oppose the sale of American farms, real estate, and food processing operations to foreign  
7 governments, investors, corporations, or any other foreign entity, especially in circumstances where the  
8 merger, sale, or acquisition consolidates markets.

9  
10 We strongly urge the Department of Justice (DOJ) to block any merger, sale, or acquisition that will  
11 undermine U.S. food security, safety, and family farming interests.

12  
13 We urge tax advantages now available to foreign and industrial corporate investors be eliminated  
14 immediately to discourage foreign and industrial corporate ownership of agricultural land.

15  
16 We demand lands owned by foreign investors have all income taxes computed on an accrual basis so that  
17 agricultural products cannot be exported out of the United States without any income tax payment as is now  
18 possible on a cash basis. All foreign ownership of land shall be reported to each state’s secretary of state.  
19 Failure to report shall have substantial penalties. Compliance will ensure payment of taxes by foreign  
20 owners.

21  
22 We oppose foreign citizens leasing state land or holding federal grazing allotments. Those foreign citizens  
23 holding current leases should be required to relinquish them.

24  
25 We urge foreign owners of American lands be required to comply with an approved soil conservation plan.

26  
27 **2. Agricultural Land Preservation Programs**

28 We support the use of transferable development rights, conservation easements, and other tools that will  
29 keep agricultural lands in production while also providing open space.

30  
31 We support increased permanent funding for the purchase of farm and ranch properties at both the federal  
32 and state levels that ensures long-term affordability of farmland for future generations of farmers and  
33 ranchers.

34  
35 We support incentives to landowners for agricultural leasing terms of 5 years and greater.

36  
37 We support the advancement of land partnerships, such as farm incubator programs, which provide  
38 opportunities for for-profit, non-profit, and cooperative agricultural entities and strive to support educational  
39 farms that teach agricultural and business skills.

40  
41 We support when land is purchased for open space with public funds with the intent of reselling the land for  
42 agricultural purposes with development restrictions, the resale must be handled by offering that land  
43 publicly for purchase at that time.

44  
45 We demand all entities honor the terms of all conservation easements.

1 We urge the preservation of urban and regional farmland and water using intergovernmental, public, and  
2 private partnerships that fund methods and structures for cooperation and collaboration.

3  
4 We support tax credits generated through the creation of a conservation easement be marketable to those  
5 who have a tax liability, with appropriate safeguards.

6  
7 We support policies that would enable a workable Buy-Protect-Sell transaction model for non-governmental  
8 organizations and local governments to buy agricultural land as a temporary landowner, sell a conservation  
9 easement on that land, permanently protecting it from conversion and reducing its fair market value, and sell  
10 that encumbered land to a farmer or rancher.

11  
12 We support flexibility in the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) that allows for future  
13 amendments to a conservation easement to keep that land in agricultural production.

### 14 15 **3. Eminent Domain**

16 We support the Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution, which assures that “private property  
17 (shall not) be taken for public use, without just compensation.” Public use shall not be construed to mean  
18 private entities using eminent domain for private property.

19  
20 We strongly oppose the use of eminent domain by government agencies on behalf of any private entity that  
21 does not itself have eminent domain powers.

22  
23 We urge entities that have the right of eminent domain be required to prove that the land is needed to serve  
24 the public interest, that fair environmental standards will be observed, and that no more land is taken than is  
25 required.

26  
27 Any access to properties being considered for projects shall only be by written notice with adequate time  
28 frames included to adjust scheduling of entry for surveying and siting.

29  
30 All reclamation work will include input from the landowner and shall occur in a timely manner with  
31 bonding in place until mutually agreed project success.

32  
33 We support having a public hearing on any proposed use of eminent domain in the affected area, after legal  
34 notification of all area residents and landowners.

35  
36 We support good faith negotiations between the property owner and developer that include the option of  
37 yearly fees to the owner for current or future use before eminent domain shall be exercised.

38  
39 We urge a non-governmental third-party entity agreeable to all parties to assess land value in cases of  
40 condemnation and owners being compensated with appropriate annual payments or a lump sum of no less  
41 than three times the appraised value.

42  
43 We insist court-adjusted compensation return value of highest use of a property—including relocation  
44 costs—to the owner, and that all legal costs should be paid by the entity condemning the property.



1 We oppose the expansion of military reservations, including the taking of the lands and other associated  
2 rights, including air space, without just compensation.  
3

#### 4 **B. Public Lands**

5 We oppose the acquisition of private land by government entities without public hearings and the approval  
6 of local elected officials.  
7

8 We recommend that wild land firefighting and other disaster management expenses be budgeted separately  
9 from other federal land health programs.  
10

11 We support the rights of farmers and ranchers to work with federal land management agencies, including  
12 the BLM, on master leasing plans and other stakeholder processes to support healthy water, air, and soil in  
13 agricultural systems.  
14

15 We support reforms to the Equal Opportunity Justice Act, making individual citizens the only eligible  
16 entities to be compensated.  
17

18 We support revitalization of unused municipal land as farmland.  
19

20 We support long-term conservation of farmland and agricultural water access in peri-urban areas.  
21

22 We oppose the sale or exchange of public lands currently used in agriculture production to non-agricultural  
23 use.  
24

25 We urge Congress to permanently authorize Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and Secure Rural Schools  
26 (SRS), and to fully fund these programs annually. We further urge Congress to create a timeline for  
27 payment that supports local budgeting and planning.  
28

29 We urge the establishment of policy at local, state, and federal levels that will enable development of  
30 ecosystem payments to public land permittees for deliverables of interest to ecosystem services markets.  
31

32 We support land use and management of public lands that will encourage ecosystem stewardship.  
33

34 We oppose the transfer of federal public lands to state control.  
35

36 We support increased efforts for getting vacant grazing allotments filled.  
37

38 We support reducing barriers for young and beginning farmers and ranchers to access public lands for  
39 agricultural production.  
40

#### 41 **C. Domestic Horse Population**

42 We urge Congress and the USDA to immediately reinstate and fund federal inspection for harvesting and  
43 processing of equine species.  
44

1 We oppose the portion of the Safeguard American Food Exports Act of 2017 which denies horse meat  
2 consumption.

3  
4 We support the sale and consumption of horse meat that meets the same health and safety standards already  
5 in place for other livestock meats such as beef, pork, and lamb.

6  
7 We urge legislation that will provide for better disposition of feral or domestic horses and burros,  
8 specifically the sale of the animals with immediate ownership at local auction markets.

9  
10 We urge transportation regulations be revisited to allow transportation of horses at the discretion of the  
11 owner in the most cost-effective manner and for their intended purposes.

#### 12 13 **D. Endangered Species Act (ESA)**

14 We support an Endangered Species Act (ESA) that is amended to take input from affected landowners,  
15 tribal, and elected officials from a large geographic area before getting a designation under the ESA.

16  
17 We support legislative delisting of the grizzly bear and all wolf species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife  
18 Service (USFWS) under the ESA.

19  
20 We urge USFWS require the use of the best available scientific data on population trends, available habitat,  
21 and genetic background in determining the listing and possible protection of any candidate species.

22  
23 We urge federal funds be appropriated to state or federal agencies to manage endangered species and  
24 provide just compensation for producers with ESA habitat and/or for losses or harassment caused by  
25 animals protected by ESA.

26  
27 We support the automatic triggering of the delisting process when the critical mass of species identified in  
28 the listing document is reached.

29  
30 We oppose the application of the ESA critical habitat designation to habitat that is not occupied by any  
31 listed species.

32  
33 We oppose the introduction, reintroduction, and/or relocation of endangered species or predatory animals  
34 onto lands where agricultural operations, wildlife, domestic animals, or humans might be adversely affected.  
35 This includes but is not limited to wolves and grizzly bears.

36  
37 Given that public and private efforts designed to increase the population of candidate species have proven  
38 successful, federal agencies should be required to work with landowners to continue this effort.

39  
40 We strongly oppose efforts to list the greater sage grouse, lesser prairie chicken and prairie dogs as  
41 endangered or threatened under the ESA.

42  
43 We support compensation to family farmers who are adversely affected by the ESA and are managing for  
44 species and habitat recovery at a cost to their agribusiness.

1 We support candidate conservation agreements with assurances as a tool to lessen impacts to agricultural  
2 producers from candidate species that are warranted but precluded or listed.  
3

4 **E. Conservation**

5 We encourage responsible stewardship of land, water, and energy resources, and appropriate conservation  
6 practices that include state and federal reclamation standards with enforcement bonding requirements for  
7 public and private projects, including mining, logging, fossil fuels exploration, and right-of-way or  
8 easement operations, with bonds in place until reclamation is complete and successful.  
9

10 We support full funding and fund disbursement of the abandoned mines reclamation program.  
11

12 We support local participation and control in the permitting process for conservation and construction  
13 projects.  
14

15 We support an increased emphasis on reclamation and re-establishment of healthy and functioning riparian  
16 zones and other habitats impacted by mining, oil and gas development, and overuse. We support the reuse of  
17 all products possible.  
18

19 We insist that all open and unused water wells, inactive or abandoned mines, seismograph holes, and wells  
20 used to produce oil and gas be covered or filled to prevent underground pollution and to eliminate danger to  
21 people, animals, and agricultural operations.  
22

23 We support preventing contamination in surface and groundwater including shallow and porous aquifers  
24 under the protection of the Safe Drinking Water and Clean Water Acts.  
25

26 We support efforts to remediate contamination where it exists.  
27

28 **F. Noxious Weeds and Pests**

29 We urge rigid enforcement of laws to control noxious weeds and pests on all public and private lands.  
30

31 We recommend increased funding of cost-share programs to control noxious weeds and pests.  
32

33 We support alternatives to chemical control measures to control noxious weeds on public lands.  
34

35 We support re-classification of noxious weeds so that it considers the beneficial use of such plants to  
36 pollinators.  
37

38 We support local education programs designed for the identification and management of noxious weeds and  
39 pests.  
40

41 We support the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) as the primary regulatory act for  
42 applications of pesticides by farmers and ranchers. Any additional permitting required by EPA under court  
43 mandate should mirror existing record keeping, education and training requirements.  
44

1 We urge the EPA require companies with conditionally labeled pesticides (insecticides, fungicides,  
2 rodenticides, or herbicides) to complete testing within the five-year conditional labeling period.

3  
4 We support Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and continued research on biological controls to address  
5 noxious weeds and pests.

6  
7 We urge the EPA improve the permitting process to enable the effective use of poisons, biologicals, and  
8 other control tools for predators and pests.

9  
10 We support penalties on willful or negligent occurrences of chemical and biological trespass.

11  
12 We support USDA APHIS control of near plague-level pests.

### 13 14 **G. Water**

15 We support managing water resources for the benefit of all people and the environment, including future  
16 generations to have sufficient water to meet domestic needs and grow our own food, while maintaining the  
17 historic doctrine of prior appropriation.

18  
19 We strongly encourage:

- 20 ➤ The U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) expediting preparation of new sources and new measures  
21 based on current and projected hydrologic conditions to protect long-term sustainability of western  
22 river basins for maintaining agriculture, urban use, and ecosystems;
- 23 ➤ Revising the current guidelines for operation of dams and other storage structures that are necessary  
24 to address the likelihood of continued low-runoff or flood conditions;
- 25 ➤ The Bureau of Reclamation accurately accounting for evaporation and transit losses;
- 26 ➤ All relevant government agencies developing protocols and best practices for shepherding water  
27 through entire watersheds; and
- 28 ➤ All relevant government agencies prioritizing addressing factors impacting the supply of water and  
29 prioritizing the health of watersheds, improving water cycles, riparian areas, soil organic matter,  
30 vegetative ground cover, and the health of forest ecosystems and other headwater areas, while  
31 recognizing the role of agriculture in these efforts.

32  
33 We support investments to increase storage and improvements to distribution systems of water.

34  
35 We support the conservation and efficient use of water.

36  
37 We support state primacy in agricultural and individual water rights within their jurisdiction.

38  
39 We oppose the use of federal environmental law or water law as a method for re-allocation or restriction of  
40 water rights acquired pursuant to state law.

41  
42 We support legislation to prevent the change of use or removal of water from the basin of origin or non-  
43 tributary groundwater without a complete impact statement concerning the effect on agriculture,  
44 environment, and economic stability. The basin of origin must be compensated for any water removed.

1 We strongly urge federal agencies, such as the EPA and USDA, when altering the “Historic Use” of water  
2 point/system, to apply a “consensus model” by seeking input from local stakeholders including private  
3 landowners, producers, and local communities to find solutions that are inclusive, comprehensive, and  
4 resourceful.

5  
6 We strenuously oppose any efforts by the federal government through the usage or expansion of a national  
7 water policy and ESA to usurp the rights and prerogatives of individual states, irrigation districts, and power  
8 generation facilities.

9  
10 We oppose water rights being created with wilderness and National Park designations except those  
11 adjudicated by state law.

12  
13 We oppose farmers assuming higher costs for irrigation water due to increasing demands placed on water  
14 resources, instream flow for recreation, or habitat enhancement for EPA listings.

15  
16 We strongly support the concept of a voluntary, temporary, and compensated demand management program  
17 to best preserve all western agriculture.

18  
19 We support federal legislation creating a water pool in Lake Powell for Upper Basin water storage.

20  
21 We urge local, state, and federal governments to join together to research the feasibility of, and fund and  
22 build if feasible, water pipelines from Missouri, Mississippi and Columbia Rivers to water deficit areas for  
23 the purpose of production agriculture and hydro-electric projects.

24  
25 We support state, inter-basin, and federal rules and legislation that advocate for the sharing of burden across  
26 all water sectors and water users, and across the continental divide so that agricultural water rights, and  
27 agriculture itself, are not injured.

28  
29 We support alternative transfer methods that allow agricultural water users to benefit from the value of their  
30 water rights without the permanent transfer of the rights, and without adverse impacts to the local  
31 communities and the regional economy.

### 32 33 **H. Native American Water Rights**

34 We support appropriate water development or just compensation to meet the water appropriations of Native  
35 American water rights, to protect current agricultural water users.

36  
37 We urge that any irrigation project developed on tribal land be used by Native American family farmers and  
38 not operated as a non-tribal corporation, farm, or business.

39  
40 We support using the Winters Doctrine (*Winters v. United States*) in adjudicating Native American water  
41 rights.

42  
43 We urge the United State Department of Interior to clarify exiting and/or develop better agriculture land-use  
44 policies for farming and ranching in the protection of Native American Water Rights.

1           **I. Water Quality**

2 We recognize the desirability of protecting the quality of our water and assuring suitability for beneficial  
3 uses.

4  
5 We support enforcement of the Clean Water Act.

6  
7 We urge water produced in Coal-Bed Methane (CBM) development meet existing state water quality  
8 standards for surface water discharge. Laws requiring mitigation of impacts associated with CBM water  
9 must be established to protect adjacent landowners.

10  
11 We urge municipalities and other outlying areas be ensured equal access to a domestically owned safe  
12 drinking water supply.

13  
14 We support maintaining and enhancing water quality in rivers and streams to protect our environment.

15  
16 We encourage pro-active efforts to implement watershed restoration to maintain or improve water quality.

17  
18 We urge water quality laws account for discharges from wildlife, as well as industrial, residential, and  
19 commercial sources.

20  
21 We support the development of ecosystem service markets using regenerative agricultural practices in  
22 keeping with the NRCS Principles of Soil Health and the Integration of Regenerative Grazing of Livestock.

23  
24 We oppose the use of potable water in oil/mineral extraction and processing.

25  
26 We strongly oppose in situ leach mining.

27  
28 We oppose permitting new mining operations that will negatively impact water quality.

29  
30 We encourage private landowners and public lands organizations to collaborate in actively managing  
31 forested areas with the intention of increasing water yield and enhancing forest health.

32  
33           **J. Federal Water Projects**

34 We urge that the economic benefit to agriculture be considered before permitting any new federally funded  
35 water projects.

36  
37 We support federal investment in increased storage and distribution of water.

38  
39 We urge the federal government to streamline the process for approving additional water storage projects.

40  
41 We support the funding of grants and loans to build, rebuild, and maintain federal irrigation projects.

1           **K. Soil Health**

2 We encourage and support soil health practices that aim to increase organic matter, sequester carbon,  
3 increase water-holding capacity, increase resilience to extreme weather events, and stabilize the soil  
4 microbiome.

5  
6 We support soil health practices that reduce dependence on commercial chemicals and fertilizers and  
7 increase the economic viability of farms and ranches.

8  
9 We support adoption of soil health principles, as advocated by NRCS, which include manage more by  
10 disturbing less; diversify soil biota with plant diversity; keep a living root growing throughout the year; keep  
11 the soil covered as much as possible; and include livestock when possible.

12  
13 We support public and private funding to pay farmers to develop deeper topsoil, as determined by such  
14 metrics as depth of soil aggregate formation. Soil aggregates are foundational to the function of watersheds  
15 and the longevity of infrastructure, and their tending requires adaptive management by the farmer.

16  
17 We encourage USDA, private industry, other relevant agencies, and collaborative efforts among farmers to  
18 explore economic opportunities for family farmers who utilize ecosystem services which improve  
19 resiliency, increase soil health, and promote healthier watersheds.

20  
21           **L. Greenhouse Gas Mitigation**

22 We support continued research and development of carbon sequestration technologies including but not  
23 limited to involving agriculture in carbon capture and storage.

24  
25 We support agricultural producers having the opportunity to benefit from carbon capture and storage  
26 through the trading of credits.

27  
28 We support the trading of carbon credits and the potential for inclusion of carbon sequestration and methane  
29 capture as agricultural conservation practices.

30  
31 We support research into terrestrial carbon sequestration. This should encompass all practices, including  
32 grazing lands, energy feedstock production, organic cropping, wood lots, CRP, no-till, biochar, and other  
33 proven conservation methods.

34  
35 We support investment in technologies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions while producing renewable  
36 energy and scientifically-verified biological soil amendments, with consideration of emissions of carbon  
37 dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide.

38  
39 We support research and development of carbon and nitrogen insetting strategies, with a USDA  
40 commitment to creating a minimum zero emissions agriculture sector by 2050.

41  
42 We support ongoing independent research into the safety and viability of long-term geologic storage of  
43 carbon dioxide.

44  
45 We support requiring surface owners' consent for geologic carbon storage and that they retain their right to  
46 the pore space.

1 We support requirements for robust bonding, so the liability for long-term carbon storage remains with the  
2 producer, transporter, and operator.

3  
4 We support the use of the USDA or their entities to manage the inspection/verification of carbon credits on  
5 agricultural lands, as opposed to the EPA.

6  
7 We demand verification and regulation by the USDA, not the EPA, of any agriculture regulation related to  
8 climate change legislation.

9  
10 We support state and national greenhouse gas reduction targets that use a voluntary incentive-based  
11 approach to continue the economic viability of farms and ranches.

12  
13 We recognize that a carbon fee may be an important component of addressing emissions mitigation strategy  
14 so long as agricultural producers are not adversely affected.

15  
16 We urge the development of strategies and incentives at the local, state, and federal level to:

- 17 ➤ Improve our nation’s crop and rangeland resiliency as well as its long-term sustainability and  
18 productivity.
- 19 ➤ Promote increased water storage and management solutions that help producers adapt to changing  
20 conditions and decrease production losses due to lack or excess of water availability.

21  
22 Empower family farmers to lessen the negative impacts of climate change.

## 23 24 **M. Waste Disposal**

### 25 **1. Toxic Waste**

26 We support using best available technology in disposing of hazardous waste.

27  
28 We support the detoxification or neutralization of hazardous waste as opposed to concentrating the waste in  
29 another locality. No purchase, construction, or use of proposed toxic waste sites shall be allowed before  
30 approval by county and state health officials, EPA, and county commissioners in the county where disposal  
31 is to take place.

### 32 33 **2. Non-Toxic Waste**

34 We support efforts in Congress to require industry be accountable for the waste they generate.

35  
36 We support the ability of rural landowners to utilize alternative waste systems that have National Sanitation  
37 Foundation approval without the requirement of a conventional onsite wastewater treatment system.

### 38 39 **3. Recycling**

40 We favor recycling of all products, including oil and other lubricants.

41  
42 We encourage development of recycling and composting.

43  
44 We encourage creation of incentives to increase the use of recyclable materials.



1 We support reduction of food waste according to the EPA food recovery hierarchy.

2  
3 We encourage the use of reusable and recyclable packaging in the processing, transport, and retailing of  
4 agricultural products.

#### 5 6 **4. Pollution Prevention**

7 We support policies that create incentives to avoid production of waste rather than policies to remediate the  
8 production of waste.

### 9 10 **Article VIII. Energy**

#### 11 **A. Power Utilities**

12 We oppose electric deregulation at the federal and state level.

13  
14 We oppose any sale of Power Marketing Authorities.

15  
16 We support the allocation of Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) power for cooperatives.

17  
18 We support electrical storage as an integral part of the electrical system.

19  
20 We encourage the further build-out of transmission infrastructure, including upgrades of existing  
21 distribution lines to support distributed energy generation for renewable energy.

22  
23 We are opposed to any surcharge on hydroelectric rates.

24  
25 We oppose changing historic use of stored water in relation to power generation.

26  
27 We urge development of hydroelectric power-generated energy with appropriate safeguards for the  
28 environment, fish and wildlife, agricultural land, and water rights.

29  
30 We support the modernization of existing hydroelectric plants to provide maximum electrical energy,  
31 especially in the western states, with any increase of energy allocated to preference power users.

32  
33 We urge the development of secondary hydrogeneration structures at existing dam sites to at least double  
34 current energy production.

35  
36 We support net metering.

37  
38 We support uniform interconnectivity standards that allow for farm and ranch operations to fully utilize  
39 existing system capacity.

#### 40 41 **B. Energy**

##### 42 **1. Research and Development**

43 We support the development and implementation of a comprehensive national energy policy which aids in  
44 the United States' energy independence, fair and equitable distribution, and includes a focus on  
45 conservation.

1 We support continued research and development of natural, non-polluting, renewable energy sources.

2  
3 We urge individuals and companies to make their homes and businesses more energy efficient.

4  
5 We support public utilities and rural electrics exploring other energy sources for generation.

6  
7 We oppose efforts to initiate commercial leasing of federal shale resources before effectiveness of and  
8 impacts from research, development, and demonstration technologies are known.

9  
10 **2. Alternative and Renewable Energy**

11 We support a balanced energy policy that conserves and protects our nation’s environment and recognizes  
12 the special energy needs of America’s agricultural sector.

13  
14 We support the development of renewable sources of energy as our top priority in reducing dependence on  
15 fossil fuels.

16  
17 We urge Congress to direct the appropriate federal agencies to conduct a study of the national rural electric  
18 grid to determine its existing capacity to develop a domestic, distributed generation network.

19  
20 We support federal energy incentives for all forms of alternative and renewable energy that encourage  
21 community, farm, and ranch-owned production, including the Production Tax Credit, Rural Energy for  
22 America Program, and Biomass Crop Assistance Program.

23  
24 We support farmer and rancher ownership of and involvement in alternative energies.

25  
26 We support the establishment of a wide variety of renewable energy sources that include but are not limited  
27 to wind, solar, biomass, hydro, hydrogen fuel cells, algae, geothermal, and any other available source. It is  
28 important to encourage the land grant and community colleges to focus their research on those cropping  
29 systems that provide renewable energy. Federal and state funds should be targeted to encourage diversified  
30 community-based energy systems that create jobs and new wealth in rural areas of the country.

31  
32 We support renewable energy goals to reduce carbon emissions.

33  
34 We support renewable energy developmental rights remaining with surface owners, including the use of air  
35 space.

36  
37 We support maximum opportunities for wind development through cooperative wind associations.

38  
39 We support a tradable federal production tax credit for locally owned projects.

40  
41 We urge all states to require bonding for removal of and reclamation for all renewable energy projects.

42  
43 We strongly support increased federal investment in transmission capacity, including merchant lines.

44  
45 We urge siting of new transmission lines to take advantage of existing corridors wherever possible.

1 We urge siting on public lands vs. private lands. If sited on private lands, landowners should be  
2 compensated in a fair and equitable fashion for the easement, including the option of annual payments.

3  
4 We support research in and development of advanced cellulosic biofuels.

### 6 **3. Distributed Energy Generation**

7 We support distributed energy generation in rural areas because it can provide additional income to farmers  
8 and ranchers who place energy generation systems (i.e., small hydroelectric, anaerobic digesters, wind  
9 generators, photovoltaic arrays, etc.) on their land, circulating local development dollars through the local  
10 economy and benefiting rural communities.

11  
12 We support the development of agrivoltaics, the blending of photovoltaics with farming operations.

13  
14 We support the development of funding mechanisms that reduce the high first cost of renewable energy  
15 generators that have no continuing fuel costs.

16  
17 We support the development of rural microgrids to provide resiliency on the electric grid in the face of  
18 increasing natural disasters.

### 20 **4. Federal Transmission Planning**

21 We strongly support continued build out of the federal transmission system. Proposals have called for the  
22 federal government to promote and administer large transmission projects. When siting transmission  
23 corridors we urge consideration of the needs of landowners.

24  
25 We support a comprehensive strategy to increase security of the national electric grids to prevent rolling  
26 blackouts and to protect utility infrastructure.

27  
28 We support large-scale investment in transmission lines and the grid energy system across the country by  
29 federal and state authorities to aid in the efficient use and sharing of energy, especially renewables.

### 31 **5. Nuclear**

32 We support the use of nuclear power with extreme caution, using safe and proper methods of waste  
33 transportation and disposal.

34  
35 We support research into thorium, cold fusion technology, and other fuels to replace uranium in nuclear  
36 plants.

37  
38 We oppose federal preemption in permitting nuclear waste facilities.

### 40 **6. Petroleum/Domestic Energy Production**

41 We oppose the EPA's classification of crankcase oil and other lubricants as hazardous waste.

42  
43 We support Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency (CAFE) standards as they have wide-ranging benefits  
44 resulting from less fuel consumption.

1 We support setback restrictions from occupied dwellings including schools and hospitals for drilling site  
2 location and tank battery placement. Such setback restrictions should be in full compliance with federal  
3 National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) standards and take into consideration potential impact on  
4 nationally designated archeological sites.

5  
6 We urge landowner input be sought and prioritized in locating tank batteries and other production structures.

7  
8 We support full public disclosure of chemicals used in drilling, fracturing, and production practices.

9  
10 We support compensation for damages to structures, lives, and livelihoods resulting from earthquakes  
11 caused by injection of water and other fluids from oil and gas production.

12  
13 We urge stringent casing standards be established and enforced to ensure bore hole containment integrity.

14  
15 Well contamination and closure of wells and pipelines shall be the responsibility of oil and gas companies.

16  
17 We support a reclamation bond be placed on all new oil and gas wells in an amount equal to the average  
18 cost of cleanup and reclamation of existing and abandoned wells.

19  
20 We urge comprehensive baseline and subsequent water testing be completed to ensure our water quality is  
21 protected.

22  
23 We support ongoing monitoring with tracers to track the movement of chemicals used in all phases of  
24 petroleum production.

25  
26 We support all produced water either being purified or re-injected to its parent geologic formation.

27  
28 We support requiring oil and gas facilities utilize all produced water prior to accessing surface or subsurface  
29 water.

30  
31 We support strong rules that eliminate energy waste and greenhouse gas emissions caused by routine  
32 venting and flaring.

33  
34 We support the elimination of federal oil and gas subsidies and those monies be transitioned into renewable  
35 sources of energy, transmission of energy, and research into energy efficient construction and development.

### 36 37 **C. Alternative Fuels**

38 We support programs that assist family farms, ranches, and cooperatives in obtaining grants and financial  
39 aid to develop bio-fuel plants.

40  
41 We support Congress enacting a permanent extension of the Production Tax Credit that will be only  
42 available to domestic producers.

43  
44 We support long term federal financial support of ethanol infrastructure including development of “flex  
45 fuel” vehicles that run on greater ethanol blends, pipelines to transport ethanol, and “blender pumps” at  
46 fueling stations to accommodate the fuel.

1 We encourage the utilization of oxygenated fuel, such as ethanol, to achieve improved air quality and reduce  
2 dependence on foreign energy imports.

3  
4 We support the continued availability of non-oxygenated fuels for all engines with older technologies.

5  
6 We support expansion of available gasoline blends up to the highest blended ratio supported by scientific  
7 data.

8  
9 We encourage the use of biodiesel to decrease our dependency on foreign fuel.

10  
11 We oppose any weakening of federal renewable fuel standards through the granting of waivers to refineries.

12  
13 We support the federal bio-fuels standard.

14  
15 We support the development of infrastructure to permit use of natural gas as an economical transportation  
16 fuel.

17  
18 We support keeping the federal fuel tax and adding a fee to charge electric vehicles their fair share.

19  
20 **Article IX. Economic and Social**

21 We urge Congress and DOJ investigate corporate consolidation, and the elimination of fair markets, which  
22 create uneven economic playing fields for small, minority, and independent family producers.

23  
24 **A. Economic Development**

25 We support economic development that preserves and expands present agricultural economic base and  
26 focuses on value-added opportunities for agricultural crops, livestock, agritourism, and renewable energy.

27  
28 We support diversification of rural economies that sustain the economic viability of rural communities.

29  
30 We support initiatives to expand access to remote employment opportunities with the federal government in  
31 rural communities.

32  
33 We support granting preference points during the federal hiring process to members of rural communities.

34  
35 We oppose federal agencies adopting telework agreements that exclude internet service providers that are  
36 prevalent in rural communities, such as fixed wireless and satellite internet.

37  
38 **B. Farm to Consumer Food Systems**

39 We support Farm-to-School (cafeteria, college, institution), Share U.S.A., the Good Food Purchasing  
40 Program, and similar programs which encourage consumers and publicly funded institutions to purchase  
41 food directly from domestic agricultural producers.

42  
43 We support CSA operations as another source of accessing farm fresh products.

1 We support CSA/subscription farms and farm-to-consumer cooperatives to sell direct to restaurants, grocers,  
2 and festivals.

3  
4 We support opportunities for farmers and ranchers to sell their products locally through farmers’ markets,  
5 on-line markets, and other local marketing initiatives.

6  
7 We encourage the development and support of the “Food Hub” model for sourcing and distributing local  
8 foods to wholesale and consumer markets.

9  
10 We support federal agencies adopting policy that sets standards for local food purchasing within their  
11 agencies.

12  
13 **C. Animal Welfare**

14 We support teaching animal welfare, as opposed to animal rights, through educational programs and  
15 agricultural organizations.

16  
17 We support humane treatment of all domesticated animals, and their access to proper food, shelter, and  
18 water.

19  
20 We oppose the adoption of laws that criminalize whistleblowing, documentation, and reporting of animal  
21 welfare violations.

22  
23 We support prosecution of individuals who falsely document, falsely report, or manipulate evidence of  
24 animal mistreatment. These individuals should be made to provide for a remedy at equity or at law incurred  
25 by the victims of such false documentation.

26  
27 We encourage producers throughout our region to follow accepted industry standards on animal welfare  
28 based upon expert input and consideration.

29  
30 We urge owners of all types of livestock properly dispose of their animals and not release them on private or  
31 public lands.

32  
33 We support the development of egg sexing technologies to eliminate the euthanasia of male chicks raised in  
34 egg-laying operations.

35  
36 We oppose the euthanasia of chicks because of their sex.

37  
38 We oppose the prohibition of generally accepted animal husbandry practices.

39  
40 We support a state’s right to regulate the sale of animal products.

41  
42 We oppose animal shelters, rescues, and affiliated organizations that are involved in “Retail Rescue.”

43  
44 We oppose the illegal importation and/or inter-state trafficking of animals for animal shelters, rescues, and  
45 affiliated organizations.

1           **D. Tax Reform**

2 We urge Congress to take a proactive approach to the reduction of the federal deficit. The balanced  
3 approach would result in a combination of reduced federal government spending and an increase in revenue  
4 through modest federal tax increases for individual taxpayers, businesses, and corporations.

5  
6 We urge Congress to close loopholes that allow corporations or individuals to evade their fair share of taxes  
7 and fund and empower the IRS to enforce existing tax law.

8  
9 We urge Congress to continue the task of tax revision. Changes should include the following:

- 10       ➤ Provide federal income tax credits or refunds if no tax liability exists for the payment of state and  
11       local property taxes.
- 12       ➤ Reform of the capital gains tax to include an exemption on the sale of farm real estate comparable to  
13       the exemption provided on the sale of a residence.
- 14       ➤ Reduction or elimination of the capital gains tax for a seller when land and machinery are sold to a  
15       beginning farmer at a reduced rate, or the seller finances the purchase at a discounted interest rate.
- 16       ➤ Allow a one-time per person rollover of the capital gains from the sale of a farm or small business  
17       into an approved retirement plan.
- 18       ➤ Federal tax credits be given to landowners who implement riparian improvements on their property  
19       under approved federal agency guidelines, such as those of NRCS.
- 20       ➤ Any tax policy change should continue allowing the cost of health insurance coverage for self-  
21       employed people to be fully deductible for income tax purposes on Schedule C or Schedule F;
- 22       ➤ Elimination of the ability to utilize offshore tax havens to reduce tax liability.

23  
24 We support improved tax benefit for producers to donate marketable and/or non-marketable agriculture  
25 products to charitable or gleaning organizations.

26  
27           **E. Estate Tax**

28 We support a permanent exemption system for estate taxes which allows family-owned farms, ranches, and  
29 rural, agriculturally related businesses to continue to exist.

30  
31 We oppose shifting tax liability from the estate tax to the capital gains tax through the elimination of the  
32 “step-up” provision within the capital gains tax policy.

33  
34           **F. Internet Sales Tax**

35 We support requiring that Internet purchases be subject to local and state sales tax based on the physical  
36 address of the purchaser

37  
38           **G. Commodity Futures Markets**

39 We support producer education in the use of commodity futures markets. Any illegal activities by  
40 commodity futures traders and speculators should be dealt with by the full enforcement of the law.

41  
42 We support a new research revenue stream with an assessment of \$1 per agricultural commodity futures  
43 contract traded on an exchange. Such assessments would be deposited in the state checkoff fund for the  
44 respective commodity, be used exclusively for research for that commodity, and not displace existing  
45 checkoff funding sources.

1 We urge the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) to modify the authority granted the  
2 exchanges to expand commodity price variations.

3  
4 We urge the CFTC direct exchanges to return the variation allowances to the year 2000 spread which will  
5 bring more stability to the daily market of commodities and provide a partial safety net to producers.

6  
7 We urge the CFTC direct exchanges to expand the number of delivery points within their regions for actual  
8 delivery options for farmers and elevators buying from farmers.

#### 9 10 **H. Warehousing**

11 We urge Congress to take all necessary legislative action to ensure that stored commodities shall remain the  
12 property of those persons who delivered them for storage.

13  
14 We support requiring warehouses issue negotiable warehouse receipts upon request.

15  
16 We support the right of individual states to regulate the grain merchandising activities of warehouses  
17 licensed by the federal government under the Grain Standards and Warehouse Improvement Act of 2000  
18 (USWA).

#### 19 20 **I. Vertical Integration and Price Fixing**

21 We urge all branches of government act to prevent oligopolies and monopolies and remedy the  
22 concentration of power in the packing, marketing, processing, and crop and livestock input industries.

23  
24 We support USDA's efforts to create, implement, and fund GIPSA rules and regulations per Congressional  
25 authority.

26  
27 We demand the authorities prohibit large corporate meat packers from operating feedlots and/or owning and  
28 controlling captive supply livestock.

29  
30 We support the ability of producers to own value-added processing and crop and livestock input marketing  
31 facilities within a cooperative structure.

32  
33 We support reinstating mandatory price reporting laws.

#### 34 35 **J. Anti-Trust Enforcement**

36 We support Congress and the Executive Branch using the full might of anti-trust laws to break up  
37 oligopolies that are causing unfair markets, price fixing, and non-competitive industry consolidation.

38  
39 We urge anti-trust legislation be enforced to control monopolistic concentration in energy production and  
40 distribution, and investigation of large corporate interests that control our current energy sources.

41  
42 We support a stringent review process of any large agribusiness, food and beverage manufacturing,  
43 distribution, and grocery retail and oppose any merger that will further constrict the food value chain and  
44 negatively impact farmers, ranchers, agricultural workers, and consumers.



1           **K. Scaling of Legislation and Regulations**

2 We oppose legislation and regulations that fail to consider the differences between small family or  
3 community operations and multi-national corporations.  
4

5           **L. Federal Reserve**

6 Appointments to the Federal Reserve Board should be limited to a term of five years, and one-half of the  
7 appointees should represent segments of the economy other than banking, including one bona fide family  
8 farmer.  
9

10 We support an annual audit of the Federal Reserve System.  
11

12           **M. Regulating Risk in the Financial Services Industry**

13 We support reinstatement of the Glass-Steagall Act of 1933 to regulate the financial services industry. We  
14 support monitoring and regulation of the derivatives market.  
15

16 We support reestablishment of small transaction fees to reduce the abuses of flash trading.  
17

18           **N. Alternative Crops**

19 We support the removal of marijuana from the federal Controlled Substances Act.  
20

21 We support the end of restrictions surrounding the transportation and importation of hemp seeds and live  
22 hemp plants across state and federal boundaries.  
23

24 We support a definition of industrial hemp to have a THC threshold of less than or equal to 1 percent.  
25

26 We support the development and use of heritage seeds.  
27

28 We support assistance to family farms, ranches, and cooperatives in obtaining grants and financial aid to  
29 develop bio-fuel crops.  
30

31 We support research and development of less-water-intensive crops, perennial grasses and grains, pest and  
32 drought-resistant, and successions of crops and cover crops, etc.  
33

34 We urge land grant universities to maintain agricultural extension and research programs which include  
35 alternative crop production for renewable energy, carbon sequestration, and other uses.  
36

37 We support allowing banks to provide services to licensed cannabis-related businesses without penalty.  
38

39 We support the recognition of hemp and marijuana as alternative agricultural crops  
40

41 We support the use of hemp and hemp seed as livestock feed.  
42

43 We support the development of a hemp industry that focuses on processed hemp goods, such as fiber and  
44 building materials in addition to CBD products.  
45

1 We encourage cannabis entrepreneurs, scientists, and cultivators to pursue ventures in hemp in order to  
2 utilize and further realize the nutritional, medicinal, and industrial potentials of the cannabis plant.

3  
4 We urge the U.S. Congress declassify marijuana as a Schedule 1 Drug.

5  
6 We support research into alternative uses for high THC biomass.

7  
8 We support the development of hemp processing infrastructure.  
9

## 10 **O. Education**

11 We urge Congress and the Secretary of Education give full and complete attention to the unique challenges  
12 and programs of rural and small community schools, giving emphasis to the broad aspects of rural life.

13  
14 We urge Congress to fully fund the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) while providing more  
15 flexibility to state and local education agencies in implementation of the act.

16  
17 We urge Congress to fully fund the federal mandated Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) to  
18 assist all districts (especially rural districts) in meeting the needs of all students.

19  
20 We support agricultural education, personal resource development, career technical training programs, and  
21 other occupational preparation courses as an integral part of our public educational system that should be  
22 available to all who will enter the work force from the public schools.

23  
24 We recommend that more education about cooperatives be introduced into the total educational system.

25  
26 We support programs teaching consumers about the marketing disparity in agricultural products between the  
27 producer and consumer.

28  
29 We support consumer education regarding the value of family farmers in mitigating climate impacts.

30  
31 We support educational programs, educational materials, and curricula that promote American family  
32 agriculture's commitment to food quality and safety; agricultural literacy; ethical farm practices; a safe and  
33 healthful environment, land, water, and energy resource stewardship; sustainability of food supplies; and the  
34 value of recycling.

35  
36 We support the development and expansion of school garden programs.

37  
38 We support competitive salaries and other incentives to recruit, hire, and retain teachers, administrators, and  
39 support staff, especially in rural areas. We support the expansion of federal student loan forgiveness  
40 programs to include agricultural producers and hard to fill occupations in underserved areas.

41  
42 We support a progressive student loan repayment system based on annual income once a minimum annual  
43 income is surpassed.

44  
45 We support the implementation of the Career and Technical Education Act.  
46

1 We support the extension of broadband capacity for high-speed internet to all schools equivalent to the  
2 services available in urban areas.

3  
4 We support further funding be allocated to expand and improve broadband connectivity in rural areas to  
5 allow students the ability to participate in on-line learning at home at capacity for education purposes.

6  
7 We support the development of federal programs that provide sourcing of computer equipment to school  
8 districts allowing them the ability to issue personal electronic learning devices to each student.

9  
10 We support the development of programs that allow households, caregivers, and educators the resources and  
11 funding to ensure students have proper support in the case of long-term virtual learning.

### 12 13 **P. Land Grant Universities**

14 We urge land grant universities recommit to their original mission and purpose.

15  
16 We urge the federal government restore historic levels of funding for land grant universities in order to limit  
17 corporate influence in research.

18  
19 We urge the governing board be made up of at least 50 percent individuals engaged in family agriculture.

20  
21 We urge increased financial support for land grant universities for agricultural extension and research  
22 programs that:

- 23 ➤ Utilize the experience of people involved in innovative production agriculture.
- 24 ➤ Support conventional agriculture. Support agricultural practices rooted in traditional ecological  
25 knowledge.
- 26 ➤ Facilitate adding value to farm products in locally owned cooperatives and businesses and empower  
27 low and moderate-income families to improve their economic conditions.
- 28 ➤ Develop training and outreach to assist small-acreage owners in understanding and implementing  
29 proper resource management practices.
- 30 ➤ Focus research on crops suitable for efficient renewable energy production.
- 31 ➤ Focus research on crops suitable for small diversified agricultural operations.
- 32 ➤ Support 4-H and FFA programs.

### 33 34 **Q. Health Care**

35 We support the right of every American to have access to affordable and quality medical, dental, vision, and  
36 mental health services.

37  
38 We support the right of every American to have access to quality, affordable end-of-life care.

39  
40 We support lowering health costs through disease prevention, wellness promotion, nutrition, and alternative  
41 healthcare practices.

42  
43 We support increased funding of public health programs for disease control and prevention.

1 We support federal appropriations for medical research, public health services, and scholarships for training  
2 all health professionals.  
3  
4 We urge that federal, state, and local public health agencies provide coordinated and timely services and  
5 communications.  
6  
7 We support legislation which will promote active, evidence-based, and non-political interventions for  
8 disease control and prevention.  
9  
10 We support federal funding for Medicare and Medicaid.  
11  
12 We support the expansion of Medicare to age 55.  
13  
14 We oppose any reduction in Medicaid and Medicare reimbursement to providers, particularly those serving  
15 rural communities.  
16  
17 We support basic acute inpatient services and outpatient primary care in rural communities, and rural  
18 hospitals and Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) that provide services as a healthcare hub for rural areas.  
19  
20 We support payment reform efforts and continued cost-based reimbursement for rural hospitals and CAHs  
21 for Medicare services.  
22  
23 We support recalculation of Medicaid and Medicare reimbursement formulas to ensure medical coverage to  
24 all citizens.  
25  
26 We support Medicare coverage for hearing, vision, and dental services.  
27  
28 We support federal funding for rural health clinics.  
29  
30 We oppose federal and state regulations that hinder emergency medical technicians and fire department  
31 services.  
32  
33 We urge priority be given to building assisted-living facilities in rural communities.  
34  
35 We oppose the Medicaid Estate Recovery Program.  
36  
37 We are opposed to unnecessary hospital construction or expansion and duplication of sophisticated hospital  
38 equipment.  
39  
40 We urge expanded use of physician assistants or nurse practitioners in areas that cannot support a medical  
41 doctor.  
42  
43 We support cost containment of pharmaceuticals, healthcare services, and medical devices.  
44  
45 We support incentives for medical professionals who agree to serve medically underserved areas.  
46

1 We urge local medical facilities and hospitals to provide medical care for the indigent and working poor  
2 who do not qualify for Medicare or Medicaid or do not have their own health insurance.

3  
4 We urge the Medicare program to include the treatment of long-term illness as a covered benefit.

5  
6 We support changing the Medicare Part A hospice benefits, so they are dependent upon physician  
7 certification rather than a specified time limit.

8  
9 We urge the federal government allow the purchase of prescription drugs from the least expensive source.

10  
11 We support the reauthorization and expansion of the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (SCHIP).

12  
13 We support a workable, affordable, single-payer, and standardized national health insurance program  
14 available to all citizens.

15  
16 We support a workable, affordable public option health insurance program that is available to all citizens.

17  
18 We support insurance companies providing coverage for preventative care.

19  
20 We support improvements in the Affordable Care Act and its implementation to provide coverage to all  
21 Americans, especially those living in rural communities and those working in agriculture.

22  
23 We oppose the takeover of locally owned hospitals by large corporations.

24  
25 We support requiring published pricing be made available to the public in all healthcare facilities.

26  
27 We support comprehensive legislation that addresses responsible prescribing of opioids and  
28 benzodiazepines, when appropriate, and encourages alternatives under the direction of licensed medical  
29 providers.

30  
31 **R. Social Security**

32 We support the principles of the social security program, the cost-of-living increases, and the surviving  
33 spouse receiving full social security benefits from their spouse’s account.

34  
35 We oppose the use of “Chain-weighted CPI” as the method of calculation for cost-of-living increases.

36  
37 We encourage implementation of a method of cost-of-living calculations that specifically addresses the  
38 needs of social security beneficiaries.

39  
40 We support removing the income cap on FICA and oppose any reductions in the withholding rate to ensure  
41 the long- term solvency of the Social Security Insurance program.

42  
43 We oppose the loss of benefits after remarriage, reductions in social security payments based on  
44 participation in pension programs, and inequities in the social security program when joint tax returns are  
45 filed.

1 We oppose any proposal to tax social security benefits, the use of social security funds for purposes other  
2 than social security payments and putting social security funds into private investment.

3  
4 We oppose any reduction in Social Security payments or any moves to end the Social Security System.  
5

### 6 **S. Social Services**

7 We support statutory provisions that will fairly and appropriately divide the assets and incomes of couples  
8 when one spouse is institutionalized.  
9

10 We urge the social services system to commit resources necessary to provide services to the poor.  
11

12 We urge the federal government to reevaluate the federal poverty line to determine social services  
13 eligibility.  
14

15 We support distributing surplus Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) agricultural commodities to the  
16 needy.  
17

18 We support increased funding for rural foster care opportunities.  
19

### 20 **T. Veterans' Benefits**

21 We support full implementation and funding of veterans' benefits.  
22

23 We support medical research and localized care for our veterans.  
24

25 We support equal access to veterans' benefits in rural areas and tribal communities.  
26

27 We support veterans' programs to develop job skills and small businesses, such as the Farmer Veteran  
28 Coalition and the Veteran Farmer Projects.  
29

### 30 **U. Congressional and Presidential Elections**

31 We urge full disclosure and transparency of all monies spent on campaigns by any source.  
32

33 We oppose a single national primary election day. Candidates must be encouraged to campaign in rural  
34 communities to stay in touch with rural needs and interests.  
35

36 We support a cap on federal election spending and all campaigns be publicly financed.  
37

38 We support a limit on Political Action Committee (PAC), personal, and corporate contributions to  
39 campaigns.  
40

41 We support a campaign length limit of six months for all political campaigns.  
42

43 We believe any presidential candidate who receives federal funds, including Secret Service protection, must  
44 participate in public debates.  
45

1 We urge that telephone “do not call” lists apply to political calls (recorded or live).

2  
3 We support all efforts to overturn the Supreme Court’s decision in the Citizens United v. Federal Election  
4 Commission case that allows corporations to make unlimited campaign contributions.

5  
6 We support the elimination of “527” organizations.

7  
8 We support limiting the amount of money spent by candidates in federal, state, and local elections.

9  
10 We urge full disclosure of all financial tax records of all candidates participating in state and federal  
11 elections.

12  
13 We support secure, efficient processes that promote ease and access to voting by all citizens, including  
14 postage paid mail-in ballots, early voting, convenient access to polling places, and same day registration.  
15 These measures are particularly important for rural voters.

16  
17 We support the use of “ranked choice” voting systems for elections.

18  
19 We support making election day a federal holiday.

20  
21 We support the implementation and enforcement of Supreme Court ethics rules.

## 22 23 **V. Equality and Equity under Law**

24 We support an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that Congress shall pass no law that applies to a citizen  
25 of the United States but not to senators or representatives, or vice versa.

26  
27 We support equality and equity under law of all citizens regardless of age, race, color, religion, national  
28 origin, ethnicity, citizenship, immigration status, gender expression, marital status, source of income,  
29 military status, disability, criminal record, genetic information, or any other status protected by applicable  
30 federal, state, or local law.

31  
32 We oppose the mass deportation of any peoples from the United States regardless of their documentation  
33 status.

34  
35 We support current laws that allow law-abiding citizens to protect themselves, their families, and their  
36 property.

37  
38 We support the removal of Columbus Day as a national holiday.

39  
40 We support the creation of a new federal holiday titled Indigenous Peoples Day.

41  
42 We oppose racial profiling.

1 We encourage the review of current and future federal agricultural policies and programs meant to serve all  
2 producers in order to ensure Native American/Indigenous producers’ particular needs such as distinct  
3 structural challenges in accessing land, capital, agricultural programs, and services, etc., are addressed, and  
4 equal access is provided.

5  
6 We support actions to eliminate discrimination in the workplace, society, and marketplace.

## 7 8 **Article X. Rural Development**

9 Sustainability of rural America depends upon an enhanced quality of life for rural people who can build  
10 competitive businesses and cooperatives, therefore:

- 11 ➤ We support multi-year funding for the Rural Business and Cooperative Development Service at  
12 levels that will sustain and expand programs for revolving loans, grants, and loan guarantees.
- 13 ➤ We support increased and appropriated funding for cooperative development activities, flexibility in  
14 cost sharing, and training and technical assistance for all cooperatives.
- 15 ➤ We support fully funding and expanding existing rural development programs.
- 16 ➤ We support the reestablishment of an Undersecretary for Rural Development at USDA.

17  
18 We support workforce development programs to provide financial assistance to hire interns to enhance our  
19 agricultural workforce and provide opportunities for training the next generation of farmers and ranchers.

20  
21 We support the establishment of a fund to make both ownership and operating loans available at reduced  
22 interest rates for beginning farmers and producer owned cooperatives.

### 23 24 **A. Transportation & Infrastructure**

#### 25 **1. Railroads**

26 The Certificate of Transportation (COT) system is discriminatory and anti-competitive and violates the  
27 intent of Congress in its adoption of the Staggers Act.

28  
29 We urge Congress to:

- 30 ➤ Conduct an immediate investigation into the use of COTs and the impact on agricultural producers  
31 and their local elevators; and
- 32 ➤ Amend the Staggers Act to prohibit the use of such devices that force shippers to compete against  
33 each other for rail service.

34  
35 We urge the Surface Transportation Board, Federal Railroad Administration, railroads, elevators, and grain  
36 terminals to work together to provide hopper cars in sufficient quantities in a timely manner to alleviate  
37 harvest delays.

38  
39 We urge railroads to ship grains in a timely manner so agricultural producers are not penalized.

40  
41 We oppose additional mergers and abandonment of service, and demand breakup of existing railroad  
42 monopolies.

43  
44 We support lower minimums of product required in order for a train to stop at a rural site.



1 We urge the expansion of the national passenger and freight railway service.

2  
3 We urge railroads paint or put reflecting tape on the sides of all railroad cars, making them visible at night.

4  
5 We urge the addition of warning lights and dropping arms at all major railroad crossings.

6  
7 We urge continued research on railroad crossing technology and safety.

8  
9 We recommend that railroads be required to maintain safe tracks and auto crossings.

10  
11 We urge railroads to abide by Federal Railroad Administration guidelines not to impede grade crossings.

## 12 13 **2. Highways**

14 We support additional federal highway funding for transportation and for planning, development, and  
15 maintenance of roads and bridges.

16  
17 We support the completion of the “Port to Plains” highway system.

18  
19 We insist that all foreign trucks on U.S. highways meet the same standards as U.S. carriers.

20  
21 We recommend a nationwide standardization of the axle weights and lengths on all inter-state highways.

22  
23 We support increasing GVW weights to 97,000 lbs. for agricultural product carriers with 6 axles.

24  
25 We urge the Federal Highway Administration consider standardizing the maximum width, length, and  
26 weight for Longer Combination Vehicles (LCVs) to help equalize state to state commerce. This should  
27 include input from agricultural representatives from each state.

28  
29 We support requiring mud flaps on vehicles over 6,000 pounds of unloaded weight.

30  
31 We oppose the implementation of e-log in the commercial transportation of any agricultural products.

32  
33 We urge the implementation of safe multi-modal design and infrastructure for highways and other arteries  
34 across America.

## 35 36 **3. Air Freight**

37 We support both public and private funding for research and development of airships (lighter than air  
38 aircraft) particularly as an alternative method of commercial freight for transportation of agricultural  
39 products.

## 40 41 **B. United States Postal Service (USPS) and Rates**

42 We urge that the United State Postal Service (USPS) coordinate its mail delivery system so that all  
43 destinations in the nation receive efficient and timely mail delivery service.

1 We urge Congress to fund the USPS to achieve timely delivery services, especially in rural areas, and for  
2 live animal shipments.

3 We recommend that the USPS seek out consumer advice in initiating any changes in postal service.  
4

5 We urge Congress to repeal the requirement that the USPS pre-fund 75 years of projected USPS pension  
6 program costs in 10 years.  
7

8 We oppose political manipulation of the USPS and call on Congress to restore all funds contributed by the  
9 USPS to pre-fund the pension program used by the government to offset debt and to authorize the USPS to  
10 use those funds for operational costs.  
11

12 We oppose the closure of any rural Post Office. The lack of high-speed internet and broadband requires  
13 rural residents and businesses to rely on the USPS for transacting their business. Closures or consolidation  
14 of rural Post Offices must include provisions for patrons to receive their mail by rural free delivery.  
15

16 We oppose any increase in postal rates more than inflation for all classes of mail.  
17

18 We urge Congress to block any efforts to privatize the USPS.  
19

20 We support the reestablishment of the Postal Service Bank and support the creation and expansion of new  
21 services offered by the USPS to facilitate economic growth and development in rural and inner-city  
22 communities.

# COLORADO STATE POLICY

## Article I. Government Programs

### A. Colorado Department of Agriculture (CDA)

We promote educational efforts to publicize the fact that Colorado agricultural producers provide critical benefits to the economic and environmental well-being of our state through the production of food, fiber, energy, and medicinal crops.

We encourage the Commissioner of Agriculture advocate for Colorado's family farmers and ranchers.

We urge the CDA budget be fully funded from Colorado's General Fund and not rely on user fees.

We urge the CDA make annual inspections and tests on all licensed scales and grading or testing equipment.

We urge the CDA implement and fund a state meat and poultry inspection and grading system which would enable Colorado meat and poultry producers to market their products in retail and wholesale settings without requiring USDA inspection certifications. Until then, we urge the expansion of the number of slaughter processing units to increase access to USDA certified processing in rural areas.

We support the continued viability of new and existing farms by allowing on-site slaughter and processing, including open air poultry processing, for farms in compliance with state health and safety laws.

We support expanding the Meat Act to allow sales directly to restaurants and wholesale.

We urge the CDA continue its role as a U.S. Department of Agriculture accredited organic certification agency.

We urge the CDA enhance educational services that can inform producers who want to grow organic commodities or be certified organic.

We urge the CDA to provide technical support to agricultural producers attempting to become GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) certified.

We support wholesale buyers accepting producer choice for sourcing auditors and inspectors for GAP and organic certification.

We support laws standardizing the way moisture content of meat products is determined.

We urge CDA hire and train inspectors to keep backlog and wait times to a minimum for producers for certification purposes.

We support beekeeping and honey production as an agricultural operation.

We support research that investigates solutions to the causes of pollinator loss.

1 We acknowledge the results of research indicating that multiple factors contribute to the decline in  
2 pollinators including pesticides, habitat loss, pathogens, parasites, and climate change.

3  
4 We encourage action to support the health of bees and other pollinators.

5  
6 We support the continuation of the regulation of pesticides to remain under CDA.

7  
8 We support state preemption of pesticide regulation.

9  
10 We call for a moratorium on the open-air planting of genetically engineered biopharmaceutical crops in  
11 Colorado because of the lack of knowledge of the possible effects on the environment, nearby crops, and  
12 citizens, and an inadequate regulatory process.

13  
14 We support the Commissioner of Agriculture and Colorado legislators providing and requiring more  
15 independent research, public participation, and open records to the public regarding the proceedings,  
16 findings, and recommendations on research or further advancement of pharmaceutical crops.

17  
18 We urge CDA to define the terms “farmers’ market”, “indoor farmers’ market,” “on-farm market,” and “on-  
19 line farm market”, as well as “ag commercial” and “ag processing.” We further encourage the CDA to  
20 support access to farmers’ markets and direct producer marketing efforts within the State of Colorado.

21  
22 We urge CDA to enforce the Bee Caution Label.

23  
24 We endorse the work of the Palisade Insectary, and furthering outreach and education about its efforts.

25  
26 We support continued funding for the Colorado’s State Insectary in Palisade.

27  
28 We recommend CDA continue to monitor and enforce the Farm Products and Commodity Handler Act.

29  
30 We support the Colorado Agriculture Workforce Development Program within the CDA to provide  
31 financial assistance to hire interns to enhance our agricultural workforce and provide opportunities for  
32 training the next generation of farmers and ranchers.

33  
34 We support the establishment of a Young or Beginning Farmer Advisory Board that will serve to identify  
35 and address issues relating to young or beginning farmers in the state, make policy recommendations to the  
36 Governor, General Assembly, and Commissioner of Agriculture, and communicate to the public and  
37 policymakers about the importance of young or beginning farmers and ranchers for the future of agriculture  
38 and regional food security.

39  
40 We support the Cottage Foods Act.

41  
42 We support foods prepared according to the standards in the Cottage Foods Act be allowed to be sold in the  
43 same building, farm stands, CSAs, etc. as USDA processed and frozen meats.

44  
45 We support a diversified representation in Colorado Food Systems Advisory Council (COFSAC) of  
46 members of the Colorado agricultural community, including voices representing farm labor.

1 We support legislation for diversified crop insurance for urban and small farms.

2  
3 We support legislation that would increase reimbursement to Colorado institutions for locally procured  
4 foods.

5  
6 We urge CDA to ensure public funding of research is spent on independent research free of corporate or  
7 other influence and all researchers disclose all other funding sources.

8  
9 We support CDA to provide permanent funds for technical assistance to family farmers for grant writing  
10 assistance.

11  
12 We urge the CDA to support and develop incentive-based programs for climate smart water use.

13  
14 We support the development of Colorado Agriculture Workforce Services Program in consultation with the  
15 Colorado Ag Mediation Program to include employer/employee mediation of labor disputes with the  
16 Department of Labor.

17  
18 We support CDA licensing and regulating equine rescue facilities.

19  
20 We support the CDA creating training and informational videos and materials for the education of ag  
21 workers in all languages that producers/workers may require, to aid producers in obtaining/providing  
22 required information.

23  
24 We support the state legislature to add additional funds to the CDA's soil health programs.

### 25 26 **1. Weights and Measures**

27 We support the state certification and inspection of all agricultural commodities testing  
28 equipment.

29  
30 We support laws standardizing dockage procedures on all applicable crops sold in Colorado.

### 31 32 **2. Colorado Agricultural Development Authority (CADA)**

33 We support operation of the Colorado Agriculture Development Authority (CADA) in accordance with its  
34 original legislative intent.

35  
36 We support expanding the role of CADA to include a state loan program for renewable energy projects.

37  
38 We support full disclosure and accountability of all funds disbursed by CADA.

39  
40 We support maintaining a sufficient fund to make both ownership and operating loans available at reduced  
41 interest rates for beginning farmers and producer owned value-added cooperatives.

42  
43 We oppose the use of CADA bonds by large corporations and agribusinesses not owned by local producers.  
44

1                   **3. State Fair**

2 We encourage the Colorado State Legislature and the citizens of the state to support the Colorado State Fair  
3 and Industrial Exposition as an exhibition of agriculture, mining, water conservation, education, scientific  
4 facilities, processes, and products in or of the State of Colorado.

5  
6 We support citizens of rural and agricultural communities serving on the Colorado State Fair Authority  
7 Board of Commissioners to promote agricultural-related issues and to further the true mission of the fair.

8  
9 The above-stated support of our Colorado State Fair, however, is diminished by the Fair’s requirement for  
10 premises ID. Since the national Animal Identification System proposal has been dropped by the USDA,  
11 premises ID should no longer be required by the State Fair.

12  
13                   **4. Immigration**

14 As immigration is a federal issue, we oppose the adoption of programs like E-Verify at the state level.

15  
16 We support refugees settling in Colorado to come to rural and agricultural communities.

17  
18                   **5. Labeling and Food Safety**

19 We believe that consumers have a right to know what is in their food and where their food is produced;  
20 therefore, we support nationally approved labeling standards for foods as they apply in our state.

21  
22 We support the labeling of organic products in accordance with the Organic Foods Production Act as it  
23 would apply in our state.

24  
25 We support education of consumers regarding food safety, origin, and labeling of foods regarding additives  
26 and genetically modified and engineered organisms.

27  
28 We urge application of the precautionary principle, guided by publicly available peer-reviewed science, in  
29 regulating pesticides, herbicides, and genetically modified organisms.

30  
31 We support efforts by the CDA to provide food safety trainings and resources to food producers and  
32 processors in order to meet food safety requirements.

33  
34                   **6. Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs)**

35 We urge the Colorado State Legislature and related state regulatory agencies to support the vote of the  
36 people and not debate or change any aspect of Amendment 14 as passed in 1998 but allow it to work as  
37 intended, to set water and air quality standards.

38  
39 We will engage with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) and other  
40 related state agencies regarding the adoption, modification, and implementation of any rules and regulations  
41 on CAFOs.

42  
43 We support collecting death loss data in CAFOs.

1                   **7. Colorado Climate Plan**

2 We urge CDA work with Colorado State University to develop strategies and incentives to support the  
3 implementation of the Strategies and Policy Recommendations of the Colorado Climate Action Plan of 2015  
4 regarding agriculture.

5  
6                   **8. Urban Agriculture**

7 We support municipalities adopting comprehensive rules to enable agriculture inside city limits (e.g.,  
8 zoning, permitting, and ag vehicles licensing).

9  
10 We support adding agriculture as a permitted use in all types of zoning.

11  
12 We support the creation of dedicated resources or offices within the CDA that support urban agriculture.

13  
14 We support the classification of high tunnels as temporary as opposed to permanent structures with regard to  
15 municipal codes.

16  
17 We support ancillary structures in urban and peri-urban municipalities as an agricultural application as  
18 opposed to commercial industrial or residential including animal housing, shade, storage, fencing, and cold  
19 storage.

20  
21 We support the use of greenhouses and hoop houses/high tunnels for specialty crops as an agricultural  
22 application, as opposed to commercial or industrial, in urban and peri-urban municipalities.

23  
24                   **B. Other Government Programs**

25 We support improvement of the process for receiving and renewing driver identification for undocumented  
26 workers.

27  
28 **Article II. Agriculture Technology**

29                   **A. Raw Milk**

30 We support the production, distribution, and sale of raw milk and raw milk products, and believe the  
31 consumer has the right to food choices and the ability to determine their own risk regarding the consumption  
32 of raw milk and raw milk products.

33  
34 We support the testing standards and management practices for raw milk production established by the Raw  
35 Milk Association of Colorado. We believe the producers have a responsibility for product knowledge and  
36 labeling and should be required to inform consumers of the risks of consuming raw milk.

37  
38 We firmly endorse the herd share model, understanding that it is distinct from a direct-to-consumer,  
39 wholesale, or community supported (CSA) model.

40  
41                   **B. Animal Identification**

42 We oppose any required premise registration for animal identification purposes.

43  
44 We oppose any mandatory animal identification program designed to force livestock producers to register  
45 their premises through 4-H, FFA, or fair programs.

1 We oppose any animal ID program that results in a shift from disease control to monitoring disease through  
2 traceability because Colorado has workable methods of monitoring livestock diseases and safeguarding  
3 animal health.  
4

### 5 **C. Alternative Crops**

6 We urge land grant universities to maintain agricultural extension and research programs which focus on  
7 alternative crop production for renewable energy and other uses for such crops.  
8

9 We urge our land grant university approach research and extension across a diversity of production scales,  
10 and to include food, feed, fiber, and fuel research of alternative crops.  
11

12 We support investment in hops, malting barley, and other producer’s opportunities to support Colorado’s  
13 microbrew industry.  
14

15 We urge the Colorado State Legislature to support the development of a healthy hemp industry.  
16

17 We support research into viable alternative uses for high THC biomass.  
18

19 We support the development of a hemp industry that focuses on processed hemp goods, such as fiber and  
20 building materials in addition to CBD products.  
21

### 22 **D. Cover Crops**

23 We support land grant universities and agricultural extension services developing substantial increases and  
24 acceleration of field trials for cover crops, mixes and sequences of cover crops, and rotations of crops for  
25 diversification and resilience.  
26

### 27 **Article III. Cooperatives**

28 We encourage cooperatives to adhere to the traditional democratic principle of one person, one vote.  
29

30 We support promotion and establishment of “new generation” cooperatives that enable farmers to sell  
31 locally made, value-added, consumer-ready products to provide supplemental income.  
32

33 We encourage careful consideration be given prior to any mergers between cooperatives and private or  
34 public corporations and/or any joint ventures.  
35

36 We encourage the formation of cooperatives for industrial hemp growing, processing, and seed distribution.  
37

38 We recommend cooperative board members, managers, and employees attend training in the philosophy of  
39 cooperatives.  
40

41 We advocate that economic development agencies, as well as publicly funded schools, colleges, and  
42 universities, consider the cooperative business model and the values of the cooperative principles as an  
43 important alternative to addressing our economic, environmental, and political challenges.  
44



1 **Article IV. Water, Land, and Conservation Policy**

2 **A. Land Use**

3 We support member involvement in planning, zoning, and other policy-making decisions.

4  
5 We support counties sharing best management practices in agricultural land use with the help of state  
6 funding.

7  
8 We support enforcement of statutes that protect landowner rights and rights to privacy, as well as statutes  
9 that prevent trespassing and takings.

10  
11 We support use of residential cluster development on less productive land to protect, in perpetuity, more  
12 productive land for continued agricultural use.

13  
14 We support the amendment of CDPHE Regulation 43 to include alternative waste systems that have  
15 received National Sanitation Foundation certification without the requirement of a conventional onsite  
16 wastewater treatment system.

17  
18 We support any additional costs and demands for increased services created by residential and commercial  
19 development being paid for by the developer.

20  
21 We support local control in determining the impacts of natural resource development on the health, safety,  
22 and welfare of its citizens and community.

23  
24 We urge implementation of adequate impact fees on new growth that affects agricultural operations. The  
25 public should be provided with an impact statement on proposed development.

26  
27 We support expediting permitting processes by local governments for agricultural production and/or food-  
28 based project proposals.

29  
30 We support incentives or programs for land access in urban areas intended for sustained urban agricultural  
31 production.

32  
33 We support cities and municipalities, through their land use processes, explicitly allowing agricultural  
34 operations in non-agricultural zoned properties in urban areas.

35  
36 We support counties, cities, and municipalities, through their land use processes, allow small-scale  
37 commercial poultry as a use by right in agriculturally zoned properties.

38  
39 We support egg-laying operations with a Class 4 license or lower be classified as agricultural instead of  
40 commercial.

41  
42 We encourage counties, cities, and municipalities allow farm stands to operate on principle use sites of any  
43 size, regardless of zoning. Retail sale of goods from farm stands must include items grown or produced on  
44 the principal use site where the farm stand is located.

1 We support advancement of land partnerships, such as farm incubator programs, that provide opportunities  
2 for for-profit and non-profit agricultural entities and strive to support educational commercial farms that  
3 teach agricultural and business skills.

4  
5 We oppose increasing the size exemption on the 35-acre rule.

6  
7 We oppose corporate and foreign ownership of Colorado’s agricultural land and farms.

8  
9 We support revitalization of unused municipal land as farmland.

10  
11 We support long-term conservation of farmland and agricultural water access in peri-urban areas.

12  
13 We support land leases that incentivize conservation practices.

14  
15 **B. Agricultural Land Preservation**

16 We support allowing the use of transferable development rights, conservation easements, and other tools  
17 that will keep agricultural lands in production while also providing open space.

18  
19 We support a robust state conservation easement tax credit program.

20  
21 We support the purchase of land by local, regional, and national land trusts in pursuit of conservation, soil  
22 health, open space, and agricultural preservation or lease opportunities.

23  
24 We support cooperation between local and county authorities and landowners on farmland conservation  
25 easements to ensure ease of installment of agricultural accessory buildings and other structures necessary for  
26 agricultural production.

27  
28 We support when land is purchased for open space with public funds with the intent of reselling the land for  
29 agricultural purposes with development restrictions, the resale must be handled by offering that land  
30 publicly for purchase at that time.

31  
32 We support legislation that requires public entities to honor the terms of a conservation easement.

33  
34 We support compensation for agricultural producers who maintain and/or regenerate open space, wildlife  
35 habitat, watershed protection, clean air, and other natural resource conservation.

36 We encourage land trusts to accept farmer or community-owned renewable energy power generation  
37 equipment as part of easement agreements.

38  
39 We support oversight over conservation easements and easement holders.

40  
41 We support land link programs to ensure our working lands have a strong continuum of stewardship.

42  
43 **1. State and Local Government Lands**

44 We support a State Land Board policy on access to state trust lands, which gives the current surface lessee  
45 authority to control public access.

1 We recommend that the State Land Board follow the recommendations of the local soil conservation  
2 districts before any state pasturelands are disturbed for farming purposes.

3  
4 We support the State Land Board policy of having one principal lessee on trust lands. Multiple use and  
5 agricultural uses should be continued on all lands currently in agricultural or grazing use.

6  
7 We support an expanded interpretation of “the public good” as it exists in city charters to include for-profit  
8 farms, so they can be established on city and county parks and open space lands.

9  
10 We oppose the development of any county-mandated land use plan that diminishes the opportunity for  
11 agricultural producers to maximize the value of their agricultural land.

12  
13 We urge that the current lessee maintain their preferential right on their current lease.

14  
15 We oppose assessment of the lessee of any property taxes on property owned by the state.

16  
17 We support the state paying appropriate local property tax on state lands on an assessment basis equivalent  
18 to the surrounding area.

19  
20 We oppose the wholesale transfer of federal lands to the state.

21  
22 We urge the State require all development, without exception, to have water acquired before project can go  
23 forward or building permits can be issued with public notice.

## 24 25 **2. Eminent Domain**

26 We oppose state laws which allow condemnation of property for private enterprise projects or the  
27 condemnation of private property for private gain and support the repeal of any such state laws.

28  
29 We demand the Colorado State Legislature pass laws to counteract the U.S. Supreme Court ruling (Kelo v.  
30 City of New London) allowing state or local condemnation of private land for private gain.

## 31 32 **3. Multi-National Corporate Farming**

33 We support legislation that prohibits ownership by non-U.S.-residents or foreign governments of  
34 agricultural operations and food processing companies, including land and water rights.

35  
36 We urge policies against corporate consolidation of agriculture.

37  
38 We oppose centralization of food production systems that endangers food security.

## 39 40 **C. Preservation of Agricultural Water**

41 We support managing water resources for the benefit of all people and the environment, including future  
42 generations to have sufficient water to meet domestic needs and grow our own food, while maintaining the  
43 historic doctrine of prior appropriation.

- 1 We support state legislation that allows Conservation Easements for the protection of agricultural water  
2 rights from use for development.  
3
- 4 We believe water is a private property right and support Colorado’s historic doctrine of prior appropriation.  
5  
6 We oppose the public trust doctrine.  
7
- 8 We support legislation that protects agricultural and individual water rights.  
9
- 10 We support the funding and implementation of the Colorado Water Plan.  
11
- 12 We support methods for water conservation and efficiency for in-stream use or other agricultural uses  
13 without revoking farmers’ and ranchers’ water rights for not using their allocated share under “use it or lose  
14 it” water policy clauses.  
15
- 16 We support policies that reward conserved consumptive use.  
17
- 18 We support water shepherding as a beneficial use.  
19
- 20 We support local control of water resources within the confines of the prior appropriations doctrine.  
21
- 22 We oppose the state taking and reviving abandoned water rights to meet compact requirements.  
23
- 24 We support the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) continued effort to assess the water supply-  
25 and-demand situation in the state.  
26
- 27 We urge the State Engineer notify all individual water right holders of any modification to policy or  
28 regulations within a water basin which is directly affected by that decision.  
29
- 30 We support the State Engineer’s authority over the management of rivers and wells.  
31
- 32 We support the establishment of a state funded office that provides publicly funded legal representatives to  
33 financially disadvantaged water right owners.  
34
- 35 We support the management of water to allow aquifers to recharge.  
36
- 37 We support incentives and funding for cities to build sewage plants using land treatment systems if they are  
38 not injurious to water users that have a priority for the use of the water.  
39
- 40 We support the implementation of water conservation and efficiency strategies.  
41
- 42 We support new research into the effects PFAS chemicals, pharmaceuticals, and other solid human waste  
43 byproducts may have before placing them on agricultural ground.  
44
- 45 We urge municipalities pursue other alternatives for water supplies, including conservation and water  
46 projects, before acquiring agricultural water.

1 We support the continuation of the NRCS snow surveys and SNOTEL measuring stations throughout  
2 Colorado.

3  
4 We support the implementation of technologies to accurately forecast water supplies from snowpack and  
5 runoff.

6  
7 We support compensation from federal crop insurance being available to farmers when water rights have  
8 been curtailed, through no fault of their own.

9  
10 We urge development projects provide proof of a sustainable water supply before being issued permits to  
11 build.

12  
13 We support groundwater recharging for maximum beneficial use of water rights.

14  
15 We support research and development related to use of reclaimed water on food producing crops and other  
16 purposes.

17  
18 We support the Colorado River Cooperative Agreement and the process by which it was designed.

19  
20 We support reclamation of lands in “buy and dry” and “lease and cease” situations. The entity buying or  
21 leasing the water rights shall bear the expense of re-vegetating the land, mitigating weeds and dust.

22  
23 We urge Colorado state leaders to work with their state and federal agency partners to ensure timely  
24 strategies for reservoir rehabilitation and reducing sedimentation.

25  
26 We oppose transfer of ownership of the Shoshone Power Plant water right to the state.

27  
28 We oppose any effort to circumvent anti-speculation accepted practices as of 2022 by industrial water users.

29  
30 We support ag exemptions, such as maintenance and repair of irrigation infrastructure, in water permitting  
31 processes.

32  
33 **D. Water Diversion**

34 We support cooperation with other states to preserve the water allocated under existing compacts.

35  
36 We support top priority for agricultural water if such projects do not cause loss or injury to existing  
37 agricultural operations.

38  
39 We urge that when water is diverted from one watershed to another, those receiving the benefits of such  
40 diversion pay for any damage, including but not limited to increased salinity, decreased quality and quantity,  
41 legal fees, and recreational and business income losses.

42  
43 We oppose any plan to construct additional trans-basin diversions.  
44

1           **E. Water Quality**

2 We support monitoring and participating in regulatory proceedings to establish standards for preserving the  
3 quality of surface and underground water.

4  
5 We urge everyone use best management practices and established state and industry standards, in both  
6 metropolitan and rural areas, to minimize and mitigate surface and groundwater contamination.

7  
8 We support identification of, and restrictions being placed on, the source of contamination.

9  
10 We urge water quality laws account for discharges from wildlife, as well as industrial, residential, and  
11 commercial sources.

12  
13 We support vigorous enforcement of laws and regulations designed to protect the water quality of all  
14 Colorado rivers and their tributaries from sewage discharges and storm water runoff.

15  
16 We support the Water Quality Control Commission and ask that they maintain their regulation of water  
17 discharges from energy exploration and operations.

18  
19 We urge water produced in Coal Bed Methane (CBM) development meet existing state water quality  
20 standards for water quality discharge. Laws requiring mitigation of impacts associated with CBM water  
21 must be established to protect adjacent landowners.

22  
23 We support preventing chemical and biological contamination in shallow and porous aquifers, and we  
24 support efforts to remediate contamination where it exists.

25  
26 We support a flexible state water supply that includes allowing and encouraging water reuse and recycling  
27 for food crops.

28  
29           **F. Soil and Water Conservation**

30 We urge the continuation of a strong relationship with the Colorado Association of Conservation Districts  
31 (CACD) and the state NRCS technical committee to help maintain present programs and to implement new  
32 programs for conserving soil and other natural resources.

33  
34 We encourage the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) and CDA to provide grants, loans,  
35 technical support, education, and assistance programs to promote voluntary on-farm water and soil  
36 conservation and efficiency practices and methods.

37  
38 We encourage programs that support soil health research, education, and implementation.

39  
40 We support soil health practices that regenerate our agricultural lands, enhance water holding capacity,  
41 increase resilience to extreme weather events, improve farm and ranch profitability, and increase watershed  
42 function.

1           **G. Recycling**

2 We encourage the creation of incentives, research, and outlets to facilitate and increase the use of recyclable  
3 materials.

4  
5 We support the use of modern cogeneration technology that uses waste as fuel.

6  
7 We encourage the promotion of recycling and on-farm composting.

8  
9 We encourage the development of regional recycling centers throughout the state.

10  
11 We support the promotion and generation of at-home recycling pickup programs.

12  
13 We encourage statewide initiatives to provide more recycling opportunities, including commercial compost  
14 operations.

15  
16 We support the use of excess food for the highest purposes according to the EPA food recovery hierarchy.

17  
18           **H. Alternative Livestock and Non-Amenable Species (Bison, Elk, Deer, and Other Exotic**  
19           **Species)**

20 We support the State Veterinarian’s authority over all livestock and alternative livestock disease issues.

21  
22 We support the ranching of alternative livestock if it is properly regulated, managed, and licensed by CDA.

23  
24 We request legislative support that all regulatory changes be based upon the best available science, facts,  
25 and evidence.

26  
27 We oppose Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) having any authority over livestock and alternative  
28 livestock disease or movement issues.

29  
30 We support chronic wasting disease surveillance program for alternative livestock as regulated by CDA.

31  
32 We oppose management of any facet of the alternative livestock business by ballot initiative.

33  
34 We urge consideration of full market value compensation for alternative livestock and other livestock  
35 destroyed by the government on private and commercial ranches, except in cases of producer negligence.

36  
37           **I. Noxious Weeds and Pests**

38 We support formation of weed control districts across the state, including municipalities.

39  
40 We urge stronger enforcement of state laws to control noxious weeds and pests on all lands. This would  
41 include federal lands, state and county highway rights-of-way, pastureland, recreation areas, and private  
42 housing and subdivision property. Fill material hauled from one location to another should be free of  
43 noxious weeds and seeds.

44  
45 We support the ongoing effort to prevent the introduction and spread of invasive species.

1 We urge the Colorado State Legislature to provide a funding mechanism for the control of noxious weeds  
2 and pests that prevents the elimination of plants that will adversely affect pollinator health.

3  
4 We urge state, local, and federal governments to plant ecologically appropriate plants along roadways and  
5 control noxious weeds in a timely manner.

6  
7 We urge continued research into Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and other alternative methods of  
8 controlling noxious weeds and invasive species.

9  
10 We urge state and federal land managers work closely and cooperatively with county weed control districts  
11 for better management of invasive and non-native species.

## 12 13 **Article V. Energy Policy**

### 14 **A. Oil and Minerals**

15 We support an assessment of taxes on natural resource extraction adequate to fund resulting infrastructure  
16 needs for affected communities and the state.

17  
18 We urge mineral rights, if not leased, revert to the surface owner if the holder of the severed mineral rights  
19 is delinquent on taxes for three years. If mineral rights have returned to the surface owner, there should be  
20 no separate tax on the mineral rights.

21  
22 We urge royalty payments be issued within 180 days of completion of drilling of a new well.

23  
24 We urge the passage of legislation that gives local governments the authority to regulate off-site impacts of  
25 oil and gas development to ensure that companies are in compliance with all applicable rules, regulations,  
26 and stipulations prior to issuing drilling permits.

27  
28 We oppose efforts to initiate commercial leasing of federal shale resources before effectiveness of and  
29 impacts from research, development, and demonstration technologies are known.

30  
31 We encourage meaningful participation by local governments and the public in the federal leasing process.

32  
33 We support adequate funding for state agencies with regulatory authority over oil shale development.

34  
35 We support lessees of oil or mineral rights paying for all entries on the land abstracts and all transfers if the  
36 lease is resold or divided.

37  
38 We oppose the sale of federal oil shale lands and mineral rights.

39  
40 We support enforcement of monitoring meters on oil and gas wells for purpose of severance tax collection.

41  
42 We support the right to explore non-productive oil and gas zones with a primary lease.

43  
44 We urge any mining operation provide meaningful assurances such as a bond that they will not harm water,  
45 air, or soil quality or public health, before they are given the required local and state permits to commence  
46 their operation.



1 We oppose permitting open-pit cyanide gold mines in the State of Colorado, to protect our valuable natural  
2 resources, including our ground and surface water.  
3

#### 4 **B. Colorado Energy and Carbon Management Commission (ECMC)**

5 We believe the development of the natural resources of oil and gas in the State of Colorado should be  
6 regulated for the protection of public health, safety, welfare, and the environment.  
7

8 We support requiring oil and gas companies to publicly disclose all chemical compounds being introduced  
9 into the environment in oil and gas production and development.  
10

11 We support a working relationship with the ECMC and agriculture agencies to forge productive options and  
12 solutions for mineral development compensation.  
13

14 We support equal representation by non-industry citizens on the ECMC, including a representative of the  
15 health industry and a family farmer or rancher.  
16

17 We support reasonable and fair compensation to surface owners for damage caused by mineral  
18 development, especially for those circumstances involving a split estate, as well as legal recourse available  
19 for disputes to all citizens of the United States.  
20

21 We support fair compensation to the surface owner.  
22

23 We support setback restrictions of one thousand feet from occupied dwellings including schools and  
24 hospitals for drilling site location and tank battery placement.  
25

26 We urge landowner input be sought in locating tank batteries and other production structures.  
27

28 We demand stringent casing standards be established and enforced to insure bore hole containment  
29 integrity.  
30

31 We demand comprehensive water quality baselines and adequate subsequent water testing be completed to  
32 ensure water quality is protected. In addition, we support ongoing monitoring of chemicals using best  
33 available technology according to industry standards in all phases of petroleum production.  
34

35 We support all produced water either be purified or re-injected to its parent formation.  
36

37 We support requiring oil and gas facilities utilize all produced water prior to accessing surface or subsurface  
38 water.  
39

40 Well contamination mitigation and closure of wells and pipelines shall be the responsibility of oil and gas  
41 companies and shall be completed in a timely manner.  
42

43 We support compensation for damages resulting from earthquakes caused by injection of water and other  
44 fluids from oil and gas production.  
45

1 We support a reclamation bond be placed on all new oil and gas wells in an amount equal to the average  
2 cost of cleanup and reclamation of existing abandoned wells.  
3

### 4 **C. Colorado Energy Office**

5 We call on the Department of Natural Resources and the Colorado Energy Office to develop a  
6 comprehensive energy policy.  
7

8 We support a balanced energy policy that conserves and protects our nation’s environment and recognizes  
9 the special energy needs of America’s agricultural sector.  
10

11 We urge state support of alternative and renewable types of distributed power systems.  
12

13 We support incentives for renewable energy development.  
14

15 We support research and development of Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) facilities and encourage a state  
16 policy that landowners will own the pore space that stores carbon, with the understanding that landowners  
17 will not share in the risks associated with CCS.  
18

19 We support the development of infrastructure to permit use of natural gas as an economical transportation  
20 fuel.  
21

### 22 **D. Biofuels**

23 We support the Colorado bio-fuels industry and the use of alternative crops for energy use.  
24

25 We urge the use of ethanol-based fuels.  
26

27 We support the further development and distribution of E-85 fuel and biodiesel, including long term  
28 financial support to build the infrastructure bio-fuel firms say is necessary to compete in the marketplace.  
29

30 We support the further development of infrastructure for blender pumps.  
31

32 We support the expansion of available gasoline blends to the highest blended ratio as supported by scientific  
33 data.  
34

### 35 **E. Wind**

36 We encourage the individual or community-owned development and ownership of wind energy and co-  
37 generation production; in cases of development, we support fair reimbursement to landowners.  
38

39 We oppose the severance of wind rights from landowner surface rights.  
40

41 We support wind energy facilities to be designed and operated in ways that minimize risk and injury to  
42 livestock and wildlife.  
43

### 44 **F. Solar**

45 We encourage the development of solar energy, including solar thermal and agrivoltaics, in Colorado.

1 We oppose the severance of solar rights from landowner surface rights.

2  
3 We oppose the separation and displacement of irrigation as a result of solar energy development. We urge  
4 any development on irrigated acres include an irrigation plan.

5  
6 We support solar installations being sited and installed after consultation with Colorado Parks and Wildlife  
7 to minimize negative impact on wildlife habitat and migration.

### 8 9 **G. Hydro-Electric**

10 We support explicit authorization for in-pipe small hydro and in-ditch small hydro.

### 11 12 **H. Distributed Energy Generation**

13 We support local distributed energy generation in rural areas because it circulates local development dollars  
14 through the local economy and benefits rural communities.

15  
16 We support utility providers' development of distribution line up-grade plans to provide for future  
17 distributed generation assets in a timely, logical and economical manner.

18  
19 We support the development of rural microgrids to provide resiliency in the face of natural disasters and to  
20 support the ability to separate from the larger grid when it is experiencing difficulties for any reason.

### 21 22 **I. Electric Transmission**

23 We support new transmission corridors if landowners are compensated in a fair and equitable fashion for the  
24 easement.

25  
26 We support annual payments as a form of compensation for easements.

27  
28 We oppose allowing independent transmission developers siting corridors to exercise eminent domain.

29  
30 We urge private property owners be invited to be part of transmission planning meetings.

### 31 32 **J. Net Metering Policy**

33 We support the expansion of net metering to include the totality of farm and ranch operations.

34  
35 We support standard offers for locally owned renewable energy projects that are economically viable and  
36 provide benefits to the energy grid through distributed energy production.

### 37 38 **K. Financial Incentives**

39 We support community renewable energy projects to allow for greater public participation.

40  
41 We support a state tax credit for smaller renewable energy projects which is tradable to any interested  
42 parties.

43  
44 We support a personal property and sales tax exemption for renewable energy equipment similar to the  
45 Farm Equipment Exemption.

1 We support the dedication of a portion of Colorado’s severance tax revenues to individual and community-  
2 owned renewable projects.

3  
4 We support the incorporation of individual and community-owned projects into larger commercial projects,  
5 such as the sharing of transmission lines.

6  
7 We support the reservation of transmission line capacity for renewable energy.  
8

9 **L. Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS)**

10 We support a state policy that would create an expanded renewable portfolio standard for alternative energy,  
11 especially advocating solar, wind, biomass, geo-exchange, and biofuels.

12  
13 We support renewable energy goals to reduce carbon emissions.

14  
15 We support state policy that requires life-cycle analysis on all generation options.

16  
17 We urge the Colorado Rural Electric Association (CREA), Tri-State Generation and Transmission  
18 Association, WAPA and all member-owned utilities to fully support the development of distributed  
19 renewable energy generation, including opening their grid to purchasing individual and community-owned  
20 renewable energy.

21  
22 We support continued research and development of natural, non-polluting, renewable energy sources,  
23 including but not limited to cellulosic ethanol and woody biomass.

24  
25 We encourage the Colorado Energy Office to organize interested stakeholders into a task force on  
26 renewable energy, to provide research and support for renewable energy programs, bio-fuel production, and  
27 carbon sequestration.

28  
29 We encourage the Colorado Energy Office to work in cooperation with CREA to conduct a statewide  
30 distributed generation study.

31  
32 **M. Energy**

33 We direct the Colorado State Legislature to instruct the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), Rural Electric  
34 Associations, and their power suppliers to prioritize energy efficiency, conservation, and renewable energy  
35 as pre-requisites to approval of additional power generating facilities.

36  
37 We oppose the sale of any Power Marketing Authorities (PMA).

38  
39 We oppose any deregulation of rural utilities and services that will increase rates.

40  
41 We oppose the breaching of any dams generating electric power or providing agricultural water.

42  
43 We encourage mitigation and revitalization efforts for local communities that have been negatively  
44 impacted by state or federal energy policy.  
45

1           **N. Emissions**

2 We support the trading of carbon credits when it reduces buyers’ emissions over time and the potential for  
3 inclusion of carbon sequestration and methane capture as agricultural conservation practices.

4  
5 We support research in terrestrial carbon sequestration. This should encompass all practices, including  
6 grazing lands, energy feedstock production, organic cropping, wood lots, CRP, CREP, no-till, biochar, and  
7 other proven conservation methods.

8  
9 We support state and national greenhouse gas reduction targets that use a voluntary incentive-based  
10 approach to continue the economic viability of farms and ranches.

11  
12 We ask for mandated greenhouse gas emission reductions across all sectors of the economy.

13  
14 We oppose mandatory requirements for the purchase or use of electric vehicles or agricultural equipment.

15  
16 **Article VI. Economic and Social Policy**

17           **A. Social Justice Policy**

18 We oppose profiling and discrimination based on age, race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity,  
19 citizenship, immigration status, gender expression, marital status, source of income, military status or  
20 disability, criminal record, genetic information, or any other status protected by applicable federal, state, or  
21 local law

22  
23 We support actions to eliminate discrimination in the workplace, society, and marketplace.

24  
25           **B. Agricultural Labor, Worker Dignity, and Economic Justice**

26 We support paying a fair wage based on the type of work and industry standards.

27  
28 We support providing appropriate training and tools to minimize the risk of injury in the workplace.

29  
30 We support employees having access to service providers and medical care during breaks or during a shift if  
31 there is an emergency.

32  
33 We recognize oligopolies, fixing prices, and cheap food policy harm farmers and farm workers. We support  
34 efforts to assure fairness for all involved in the production of food.

35  
36 We support the creation of a program similar to the Fair Food Program, including incentives for  
37 participation.

38  
39 We support allowing individuals under the age of 18 to work on family farms and ranches.

40  
41           **C. Economic Development**

42 We support state economic development strategies that support all regions within Colorado.

1 We support the use of nonproductive lands in agricultural areas for nonagricultural uses provided they  
2 maintain or create a harmonious environment in the community and do not place an undue burden on local  
3 economies and local governments.

4  
5 We support the establishment of more localized food systems that prioritize investment in regional  
6 producers.

7  
8 We encourage the formulation of policies to promote the institutional procurement of locally and regionally  
9 farmed foods.

10  
11 We support an infrastructure that promotes stable economic systems that preserve rural character.

12  
13 We oppose incentives that attract multi-national businesses and corporations that compete unfairly with  
14 local small businesses.

15  
16 We support the adoption of food security advocacy programs such as the Denver Food Vision across the  
17 state.

18  
19 We support continued research and development of the Colorado Blueprint for Agriculture and Food.  
20

#### 21 **D. Taxes**

22 We support reimbursement to counties for a portion of property taxes lost when tracts of land are removed  
23 from tax rolls.

24  
25 We support requiring any municipality or utility owning land outside its corporate limits to pay property  
26 taxes at the current taxing level.

27  
28 We support the concept of basing agricultural property tax on productivity.

29  
30 We recommend that repair parts for farm equipment continue to be exempt from state and local sales tax.

31  
32 We support using a progressive income tax and severance tax for education and other essential government  
33 services.

34  
35 We urge rural fire district approval of substations whenever a community is willing to staff and financially  
36 support that substation.

37  
38 We support the increase of severance taxes on all non-renewable energy sources and minerals in Colorado  
39 to make them comparable with those of neighboring states.

40  
41 We support tax advantages to farmers who donate to hunger relief organizations.

42  
43 We encourage state efforts to finance beginning farmers and ranchers including the use of tax incentives.

44  
45 We oppose the assessment of possessory interest taxation on the value of grazing and farming leases on  
46 government lands.

1 We support allowing a county or special district to lower the mill levy for 2 years without having to go to  
2 the voters to put it back to its previous level.

3  
4 We support state tax credits, refunds, or other financial opportunities for agricultural worker overtime  
5 payments, ecosystem service benefits, and conservation easements for family farmers and ranchers.  
6

### 7 **E. Infrastructure**

8 We urge the Colorado State Legislature to continue the use of the Water Conservation Board Construction  
9 Fund to rehabilitate dam structures and increase storage/holding capacity.

10  
11 We urge the Colorado State Legislature to provide a fund for water projects, including:

- 12 ➤ Construction of new dams, or rehabilitation and enlargement of existing dams;
- 13 ➤ Rehabilitation or construction of agricultural water supply systems including diversion dams,  
14 ditches, and head gates;
- 15 ➤ Reduction of evaporative and transit loss.

16  
17 We support creating uniform standards to protect and promote farm-based agritourism.

18  
19 We urge the Colorado State Legislature to establish a permanent fund for watershed health, to be engaged  
20 by interested local governments on a cost-share basis, to hire land managers to grow deep topsoil  
21 watersheds, and to fund the quantification of ecosystem service deliverables relative to soil health and  
22 human health.

23  
24 We support a study to build a downstream water storage project in the South Platte River Basin to capture  
25 flood water from high spring runoff and heavy rain events for supplying water rights of Nebraska and  
26 Kansas in a reliable, steady fashion, augmenting agricultural water rights in Colorado, recharging the  
27 Ogallala Aquifer in portions of eastern Colorado, and supplementing water flows in the Republican River  
28 Basin.

29  
30 We support those water projects that retain water use in the State of Colorado and encourage construction of  
31 additional projects which are directly beneficial to agriculture and the economy of our state, such as the  
32 Northern Integrated Supply Project (NISP).

33  
34 We support impact fees for new houses, multi-family units, and homes with new wells, to be used to fund  
35 future water storage projects.

36  
37 We support a reduced water rate and waiving tap fees for community-based food systems developed by  
38 producers using municipal sources.

39  
40 We oppose privatization of public water systems or sanitation systems.

41  
42 We encourage the Colorado State Legislature consider additional resources to support the state's  
43 transportation infrastructure.

44  
45 We support the development of broadband capacity internet in rural areas to be equivalent to urban areas.  
46

1 We support regulation equalizing telephone and broadband internet access throughout the state.

2  
3 **F. Workers' Compensation**

4 We support subsidized workers' compensation rates and costs for family farms and their seasonal industries.

5  
6 We recommend that the workers' compensation law be amended to recognize the unique nature of  
7 agriculture and to provide an option for small employers to find other resourceful alternatives.

8  
9 **G. Mechanic's Lien**

10 We support amending the mechanic's lien law to protect an individual who can prove payment for materials  
11 to a contractor from the contractor's creditors.

12  
13 We support a mechanic's lien sunset after a three-year period.

14  
15 **H. Wildlife Management**

16 We encourage CPW, prior to the process of setting seasons, harvest, wildlife populations, and overall  
17 management objectives, provide adequate and proper notice to landowners, farmers, and ranchers, in the  
18 spirit of cooperation, to allow for their active participation, recommendations, and input throughout this  
19 process.

20  
21 We support equitable damages being reimbursed by CPW for forage, crop, and livestock losses, loss of  
22 productivity, damages to fencing, etc., attributable to wildlife even if the landowner or lessee receives  
23 bounty or hunting fees on the property.

24  
25 We support the development of state policies and funding to enable farmers and ranchers to mitigate the  
26 impacts of predators to livestock.

27  
28 We oppose wildlife damage compensation in cases where problem wildlife is being harbored, and where  
29 crops and associated structures are used primarily to attract and harvest wildlife.

30  
31 We request legislative relief by permitting farmers and ranchers free licenses to hunt the legal limits on their  
32 own land, as is the practice in other states.

33  
34 We support the Habitat Partnership Program.

35  
36 We support best management practices in wildlife management administered by the CPW.

37  
38 We support the State of Colorado permitting the use of active ingredients (Diphacinone and  
39 Chlorophacinone) and other effective techniques for the control of prairie dogs.

40  
41 We oppose increasing wildlife populations at the expense of agricultural operations or to the detriment of  
42 the ecosystem.

43  
44 We urge CPW to develop a comprehensive management plan to reduce the threat posed by chronic wasting  
45 disease.



1 We oppose wildlife management by ballot initiative.

2  
3 We oppose the re-location of prairie dogs from urban to rural areas.

4  
5 We oppose the reintroduction of endangered species or predatory animals onto lands where agricultural  
6 operations, wildlife, domestic animals, or humans might be adversely affected. This includes but is not  
7 limited to wolves and grizzly bears.

## 8 9 **I. Animal Welfare**

10 We support teaching animal welfare through educational programs and agricultural organizations.

11  
12 We support humane treatment of all domesticated animals, and their right to have proper food, shelter, and  
13 water.

14  
15 We support prosecution of individuals who falsely document, falsely report, or manipulate evidence of  
16 animal mistreatment. These individuals should be made to provide for a remedy at equity or at law for  
17 victims of such false documentation.

18  
19 We support the state’s right to regulate the sale of animal products.

20  
21 We oppose the regulation of domestic livestock and animal husbandry by ballot initiative.

22  
23 We oppose the prohibition of generally accepted animal husbandry practices.

24  
25 We oppose the adoption of laws that criminalize whistleblowing, documentation, and reporting of animal  
26 welfare violations.

27  
28 We oppose animal shelters, rescues, and affiliated organizations that are involved in “Retail Rescue”.

29  
30 We support telehealth for domestic livestock and working animals.

31  
32 We support establishing a veterinarian-client-patient relationship through telehealth or in-person visit.

33  
34 We oppose requiring a veterinarian to establish a relationship with an individual domestic livestock or  
35 working animal prior to care.

36  
37 We support veterinarian technicians under the supervision of a licensed veterinarian to provide care to  
38 domestic livestock through available large animal handling certification programs confirming their  
39 proficiency in safe handling. We also support a mid-level practitioner certification for veterinary care  
40 analogous to a physician’s assistant.

## 41 42 **J. Health Care**

43 We support access to affordable medical, dental, vision, and mental health services, as well as to long-term  
44 care and hospice care, for all people.

1 We support enhanced funding of local public health agencies and school nurse programs for infection  
2 prevention (including vaccinations), reproductive health, food safety, control of communicable disease  
3 outbreaks and epidemics, prevention of chronic health problems such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer,  
4 and promotion of occupational safety.

5  
6 We support a workable and affordable national universal health care plan to provide equal opportunity for  
7 adequate health care for all people.

8  
9 In the absence of a national universal health care plan, we support universal health insurance for Colorado.

10  
11 We support a single-payer health care system.

12  
13 We support affordable rural group health care insurance plans statewide for those living in population areas  
14 of 2,500 residents or less per square mile.

15  
16 We support the public and legislative educational work done to raise the issues of healthcare access and  
17 affordability in rural Colorado.

18  
19 We support the Colorado Provider Recruitment program, within the Colorado Rural Health Center, which  
20 assists rural and medically under-served communities in recruiting and retaining health care professionals.

21  
22 We also support providing incentives for medical students who agree to serve in rural and medically under-  
23 served areas.

24  
25 We support investments in Colorado's loan repayment program, Colorado Health Service Corps, be  
26 maintained so that the resource is available for primary care providers serving rural and underserved areas.

27  
28 We support essential primary healthcare services in all geographic areas, including the use of physician  
29 assistants and nurse practitioners.

30  
31 We support federal and state funding for hospitals, inpatient mental health services, rural health clinics, and  
32 emergency medical services in rural counties that are medically underserved.

33  
34 We support rural health clinics and community funded safety net clinics as critical parts of Colorado's  
35 healthcare safety net system. We urge these entities be provided the same access to funding that is available  
36 to other safety net providers.

37  
38 We support the inclusion of rural and community-funded safety net providers in the programs and services  
39 included in the Affordable Care Act.

40  
41 We urge local medical facilities and hospitals to provide medical care for the indigent and working poor  
42 who do not qualify for Medicare or Medicaid or do not have their own health insurance.

43  
44 We support lowering healthcare costs through nutritional and cooking education, disease prevention and  
45 wellness promotion.

1 We oppose the practice of rate banding by health insurance companies.

2  
3 We oppose coverage denial based on pre-existing health conditions.

4  
5 We support the development of regional healthcare cooperatives to help meet the healthcare needs of the  
6 residents in their regions.

7  
8 We encourage healthcare companies and insurers to focus on wellness and preventive care, invest excess  
9 revenues in improved services and lower premiums, and place people before profits.

10  
11 We urge efforts be made to ensure that rural Colorado be included as the state implements a Health  
12 Information Technology (HIT) system, to use computer network systems to store, protect, retrieve, and  
13 transfer clinical, administrative, and financial information electronically.

14  
15 We urge state and federal legislation to eliminate gaps in incentive funding for rural health clinics and  
16 community funded safety net clinics to obtain funds to establish the systems necessary to fully serve their  
17 patients with new information technology.

18  
19 We support capital investment by federal and state governments to build and sustain the infrastructure for  
20 tele-medicine.

21  
22 We support state regulation of hearing tests and sales of associated equipment. Those providing these  
23 services must be licensed doctors of audiology or trained individuals who have passed the necessary exams  
24 and are licensed to provide these services.

25  
26 We support published public pricing be required in health care facilities.

27  
28 We support a state funded system of mental health services and substance abuse services across the state,  
29 including in rural areas.

30  
31 We oppose the consolidation of health service providers.

32  
33 We support comprehensive legislation that addresses responsible prescribing of opioids and  
34 benzodiazepines, when appropriate, and encourage alternatives under the direction of licensed medical  
35 providers.

36  
37 We support funding for opioid use disorder, harm reduction, and treatment.

### 38 39 **K. Education**

40 We support increased public funding of K-12 education and state supported post-secondary education  
41 systems, with a goal of approaching the national average.

42  
43 We support strong state funding for public colleges and universities to provide a broad array of post-  
44 secondary options for our citizens, and continued state support for public higher education also to keep  
45 tuition low and reduce student debt.

- 1 We support additional state funding for financial aid awards for first generation students at our institutions  
2 of higher education.  
3
- 4 We support additional investment in secondary and post-secondary career and technical education programs  
5 to train young people as electricians, plumbers, welders, mechanics, and similar professions needed in rural  
6 communities.  
7
- 8 We support public funding for Agricultural Experiment Stations and the Cooperative Extension Service.  
9
- 10 We support increased state funding for public libraries in underserved or rural areas.  
11
- 12 We support educational programs and educational materials and curricula that promote American family  
13 agriculture’s commitment to food quality and safety, ethical farm practices, a safe and healthful  
14 environment, land, water, and energy resource stewardship, sustainability of food supplies, and the value of  
15 recycling.  
16
- 17 We support removing financial barriers and disincentives to locally initiated consolidations.  
18
- 19 We support resource sharing between schools and school districts as a local approach to improving the  
20 viability of rural schools.  
21
- 22 We oppose any state-mandated consolidation of rural school districts and community colleges.  
23
- 24 We support funding for rural K-12 school districts that recognizes the challenges faced by rural school  
25 districts, especially those facing declining enrollment and low assessed valuations.  
26
- 27 We support adequate opportunities for local preschool childcare and encourage common-sense approaches  
28 to solving any shortage.  
29
- 30 We support the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) program and encourage the state to identify  
31 additional sources of revenue to support this program.  
32
- 33 We oppose “vouchers” that would divert funding from public education to private schools.  
34
- 35 We support agricultural literacy and efforts to combine curricula and disseminate it.  
36
- 37 We support a progressive student loan repayment system based on annual income after graduation. The  
38 repayment system will become effective once a minimum annual income is surpassed.  
39
- 40 We support further funding be allocated to expand and improve broadband connectivity in rural areas to  
41 allow students the ability to participate in on-line learning at home at capacity for education purposes.  
42
- 43 We support the development of state programs that provide sourcing of computer equipment to school  
44 districts allowing them the ability to issue laptops or tablets to each student.  
45

1 We support the development of programs that allow households, caregivers, and educators the resources and  
2 funding to ensure students have proper support in the case of long-term virtual learning.  
3

4 **L. Food Security and Nutrition**

5 We urge the Colorado State Legislature to appropriate funding to fully participate in the USDA Farmers’  
6 Market Nutrition, Senior Market Nutrition, School Meal, and WIC programs.  
7

8 We support implementation and expansion of a “Farm to School (Cafeteria)” program for the school meal  
9 programs, including before and after school programs for public and private schools.  
10

11 We support food education programs and local food and nutrition seminars.  
12

13 We support doubling the value of purchases of fruits and vegetables that are locally and regionally grown  
14 and are supportive of the GusNIP grant program.  
15

16 We support flexibility regarding the safe distribution and reimbursement of meals for qualifying students  
17 even when schools are closed due to emergency.  
18

19 **M. Local Food Systems**

20 We support the following definition of farmers markets: “Two or more farmer-producers, their employees,  
21 or their designated representatives that sell their own agricultural products directly to the general public at a  
22 fixed or online location, which includes fruits and vegetables, meat, fish, poultry, dairy products, grains, and  
23 other agricultural products.”  
24

25 We oppose entities not meeting this definition from using the term “farmers markets.”  
26

27 We support the identification of product origin at farmers markets.  
28

29 We support the expansion of producer-only farmers markets.  
30

31 We support agricultural buildings for public use specifically to allow producers to sell goods to their  
32 communities.  
33

34 We support the continuation and expansion of SNAP Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards to farmers’  
35 markets and CSAs.  
36

37 We support community supported agriculture/subscription farms and farm-to-consumer co-ops selling  
38 directly to restaurants, grocers, and festivals.  
39

40 We support farmers’ markets and other local product initiatives  
41

42 We support and promote the development and integrity of the Colorado Proud program to benefit Colorado  
43 producers and include a requirement that the Colorado Proud products must contain ingredients grown in  
44 Colorado.  
45

1 We support the Good Food Purchasing program.

2  
3 We support the Colorado Food Pantry Assistance Grant. We support a local procurement mandate for Food  
4 Pantry Assistance Grant funds.

5  
6 We support incentives for food hubs, food cooperatives, value-added producers, and regional agricultural  
7 producers to encourage purchasing from Colorado farmers and ranchers.

8  
9 We support the purchase of locally-grown-raised food by food pantries, state and local governments, and  
10 state funded institutions, and the funding of technical assistance to support those purchases.

11  
12 We support domesticated rabbits being designated the same as poultry regarding slaughter of animals.  
13

#### 14 **N. Department of Corrections**

15 We support supervised and voluntary opportunities for inmates to work to enhance knowledge and build  
16 employable skills in the agricultural and food processing industries.

17  
18 We support that all facilities have proper heat, air conditioning, ventilation, nutrition, and medical services.  
19

#### 20 **O. Political Reform**

21 We oppose the use of recall elections to effect policy decisions. Recall should be limited to cases of  
22 malfeasance.

23  
24 We support removing the Gallagher, TABOR, and Amendment 23 provisions from the state constitution and  
25 returning tax and budgeting authority to the Colorado State Legislature, the Governor, and other appropriate  
26 elected officials.

27  
28 We support efforts to enable counties and other governmental units to establish agreements about common  
29 issues with counties in adjoining states.

30  
31 We support expanding requirements for changes to the Colorado constitution via ballot initiatives to all  
32 citizen ballot initiatives.

33  
34 We urge adoption of public financing of all statewide and state legislative campaigns.

35  
36 We oppose the passage of any amendments or laws that limit the effectiveness of elected officials or limit  
37 our use of the representative form of government.

38  
39 We support the use of ranked choice voting systems for elections.  
40

#### 41 **P. Housing**

42 We support both movable and foundation-based safe, flexible, and affordable housing options for  
43 agricultural workers.  
44

1 We encourage local governments to allow on-site housing for agricultural workers on agricultural-use  
2 properties based on the nature and needs of the farm or ranch.

3  
4 We urge Colorado Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) to modify standards affecting agricultural  
5 workers living in employer-provided housing to specifically address the challenges during public health and  
6 safety emergencies.

## 7 8 **Article VII. Rural Development**

### 9 **A. Industrial Siting Act**

10 We support enactment of an industrial siting act in Colorado that would include the following:

- 11 ➤ Support for local land use control and the county land use commission in maintaining control of the  
12 location and development of heavy industry and mining development. It should be a location that  
13 will cause the least impact to agriculture and the rural environment.
- 14 ➤ State agencies should assist local entities in minimizing the impact on and use of prime agricultural  
15 land for such development through feasibility studies to determine the full impact of selected sites  
16 and development.

17  
18 We support a definitive procedure ensuring public information with respect to such proposed land  
19 development.

20  
21 We support a provision to encourage rural towns and communities, if desired, to acquire lands for industrial  
22 parks. These parks would be used as a method of controlling the scope and development of industry, which  
23 would aid in stabilizing local economies.

24  
25 We urge our state government to offer incentives for these new industries to locate in rural areas.

### 26 27 **B. Transportation**

28 We recommend passage of legislation that would allow weight variance permits for trucks with farm plates  
29 of up to 15 percent within a 100-mile radius during harvest season.

30  
31 We oppose additional railroad mergers and abandonment of service.

32  
33 We support the continued development of light rail to connect Colorado communities.

34  
35 We support improved access to rail service for agricultural products for family farmers and aggregators.

### 36 37 **C. Telephone and Internet Service**

38 We direct the PUC to review the existing inequities of the different telephone patterns in rural communities  
39 and, where feasible, to help make changes that would be more equitable to rural telephone customers.

40  
41 We are opposed to the deregulation efforts that could allow rural areas to be left without a carrier. Service  
42 providers that maintain telephone lines should be closely monitored and pricing kept comparable to metro  
43 areas.

1 We support local governments and rural electric co-ops being able to provide high speed internet where  
2 markets fail to provide competitive high-speed options.  
3



## **NEW MEXICO STATE POLICY**

We support legislation and regulations that consider the differences between small family farms and ranches, family farm corporations, or community and cooperative businesses operations versus multi-national corporations. Legislation and regulations should reflect differences in scale and the fundamental differences between real persons and corporations. We support a diverse and equitable food system that is inclusive.

### **Article I. Government Programs**

#### **A. Agricultural Services**

We encourage the review of current and future federal agricultural policies and programs meant to serve all producers in order to ensure Native American/Indigenous producers' particular needs such as distinct structural challenges in accessing land, capital, agricultural programs, and services, etc., are addressed, and equal access is provided.

We encourage the New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA) to align and facilitate access to research, informational resources, and agricultural services regarding the needs of rural people, the services available, and the responsiveness of agencies.

We urge that appropriate testing be made available for local areas for soil, crops, water, etc.

We oppose any efforts by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Risk Management Agency (RMA) to force ditch irrigators to sign up their farms as dryland acres during an irrigation water shortage.

We urge the FSA State Office rescind any mandate or deny any future proposal that states that acequias and all other surface water right users are not irrigated land for NAP purposes.

We urge the FSA State Office rescind any mandate or deny any future proposal that states 'drought' as an in-eligible cause of loss for perennials.

We urge the FSA State Office petition the policy holders of the NAP handbook to rescind the changes to paragraph 51E of 1 NAP (Rev. 2) to not include perennials as needing an Adequate Water Supply at the beginning of the coverage period.

We urge the FSA State Office to make concerted efforts to gather sufficient data to support average annual yields in the National Crop Table.

We urge the FSA State Office to prioritize customer service.

We believe producers should not have their irrigated base taken away due to unnatural lake, river, and stream conditions.

We oppose the burden of record keeping for hay and grain producers for bioterrorism on hay when other safeguards are already in place.

1 We support the NMDA and other agencies to improve and diversify outreach efforts, using culturally  
2 appropriate means to disseminate information about technical assistance and grant opportunities,  
3 specifically to reach disenfranchised agricultural producers.  
4

5 We support that the Secretary of Agriculture prioritize programs and policies that actively work to empower  
6 disenfranchised producers through increased access to funding opportunities, technical assistance, culturally  
7 appropriate outreach methods, and racial equity trainings for NMDA and other agency program staff.  
8

9 We support increased funding for county and regional agricultural extension services and a recommitment  
10 by all levels of government to the original extension funding formula.  
11

12 We support expanding the capacity of local, state and federal agencies to provide services and administer  
13 programs for producers especially underserved producers and support organizations and in a timely basis.  
14

15 We support the expansion of current programs and development of new programs that provide monetary  
16 compensation to producers for documented ecosystem services provided by well managed agricultural  
17 lands.  
18

19 We support New Mexico's land grant communities and support efforts to improve their access to public  
20 funding and technical services.  
21

## 22 **B. Secretary of Agriculture**

23 We support the New Mexico State University (NMSU) Board of Regents appointing the New Mexico  
24 Secretary of Agriculture and the office to remain in Las Cruces, New Mexico.  
25

26 We support the New Mexico Organic Certification Program to be maintained by NMDA.  
27

28 We strongly urge NMDA to maintain the appropriate state level positions to fully serve producers in  
29 meeting the New Mexico Organic Certification Program.  
30

31 We encourage NMDA to continue applying for the federal Organic Certification Cost Share Program.  
32

33 We support the Public Regulation Commission remaining an elected body and not becoming an appointed  
34 commission by the Governor.  
35

## 36 **C. Game and Fish**

37 We urge the New Mexico Game and Fish Department to coordinate hunting seasons and area permitting to  
38 control nuisance and destructive wildlife.  
39

40 We support legislation to allow farmers and ranchers to hunt the legal limits on their own land with the  
41 realization that wildlife is owned by the public.  
42

## 43 **D. State Livestock Board**

44 We support State Meat Inspection that:

- 45 ➤ Reduces barrier to entry for small, very small, and mobile meat processing companies.

- 1 ➤ Provides clear and achievable guidelines that are consistently enforced.
- 2 ➤ Meets or exceeds Federal Standards whilst not being a redundancy thereof.
- 3 ➤ Is responsive to the needs of a diverse and inclusive group of producers.
- 4 ➤ Increases equity in the marketplace.
- 5 ➤ Is permanently funded.

6

7 We oppose State Meat Inspection that:

- 8 ➤ Is a ‘cut and paste’ redundancy of federal inspection.
- 9 ➤ Is conducted as a policing action.
- 10 ➤ Increases regulation on businesses operating under federal inspection rules.
- 11 ➤ Is mandatory along with Federal inspection or existing custom exempt inspection.

12

13 We support:

- 14 ➤ Brand inspection of all live cattle being sold at auction.
- 15 ➤ Review of cattle prices and reporting anti-competitive behavior in the marketplace.
- 16 ➤ Expanding capacity to effectively respond to public emergencies like drought, fire, and flood to protect livestock producers and their animals.
- 17 ➤ Clear, transparent, easily accessible, and uniformly enforced brand inspection rules.

19

20 We oppose:

- 21 ➤ Brand inspection being required for hogs, sheep, and goats.

## 22 **E. Public Facilities**

23 We support the use of public facilities and public funds for multiple community purposes that encourage the public good, such as tool sharing programs, community and/or commercial kitchens, etc.

25

## 26 **F. Food Safety**

27 We support increased food safety and security with additional testing, especially of foreign-produced products.

29

30 We are in favor of clear and mandatory labeling of additives, meat irradiation, and genetically modified organisms in all food.

32

33 We believe that there should be better labeling with respect to the number of additives in food products.

34

35 We recommend that all imitation and synthetic products be labeled and disclosed in a clear manner.

36

37 We support labeling of organic products in accordance with the National Organic Standards Food Production Act.

38

39

1 We support the efforts by our partner organizations and affiliates to provide food safety trainings and  
2 resources to food producers and processors, to meet food safety requirements in collaboration with the New  
3 Mexico Departments of Agriculture and Environment and the Cooperative Extension Service.

4  
5 We support full funding of any implementation costs associated with food safety rules and regulations by  
6 the appropriate agencies.

## 7 8 **Article II. Agriculture Technology**

9  
10 We support Fair Repair and Right to Repair legislation that would allow farmers and independent  
11 mechanics access to diagnostic software, information, and other tools to repair modern equipment.

### 12 13 **A. Premise Registration and Animal Identification**

14 We believe New Mexico has workable methods of monitoring livestock diseases and safeguarding animal  
15 health.

16  
17 We believe the New Mexico Livestock Brand Board and state veterinarians have the necessary tools to track  
18 diseased livestock.

19  
20 We oppose any mandatory 4-H, FFA, or fair program designed to force livestock producers to register  
21 premises or animals in a system that is unnecessary and intrusive.

22  
23 We oppose any premise registration that:

- 24 ➤ Is mandatory.
- 25 ➤ Establishes another level of regulation, with registering premises and/or animals.
- 26 ➤ Interferes with a producer's privacy and proprietary information; or
- 27 ➤ Has the potential to undermine an open and competitive market system.

28  
29 We believe these programs have nothing to do with health and security.

## 30 31 **Article III. Trade**

32 We encourage more economic opportunities for rural and underserved communities, particularly for  
33 disenfranchised communities, working to improve their purchasing options while expanding markets for  
34 farming and ranching families and accelerating local economic activities.

35  
36 We support inter-state, intrastate, and foreign trade of New Mexico agricultural products.

### 37 38 **A. International Relations**

39 We support an immigration policy that protects and enforces the process of immigrants coming into the  
40 country legally while protecting the property and well-being of private property owners and public entities  
41 affected by border issues.

1 **Article IV. Credit Policy**

2 **A. Banking**

3 We urge credit unions be represented by the financial industry as viable institutions important to rural  
4 communities.

5  
6 We support and encourage the efforts of credit unions that create specific products and services that support  
7 New Mexico’s rural communities.

8  
9 **Article V. Water, Land, and Conservation Policies**

10 **A. Noxious Weeds**

11  
12 We urge rigid enforcement of laws to control noxious weeds and pests on all public, tribal, and private  
13 lands.

14  
15 We urge the New Mexico Department of Transportation be required and funded to control perennial  
16 noxious, invasive, and poisonous weeds along the state roadways.

17  
18 We recommend the use of mite control for bindweed as tested.

19  
20 **B. Land Commissioner**

21 We support the continuation of an oversight board or authority over the office of State Land Commissioner,  
22 and we urge that it be structured so that it is responsive to the wishes of the people.

23  
24 **C. Water**

25 **1. Agriculture Water**

26 We support legislative and programmatic efforts to maintain and improve upon the health and rights of New  
27 Mexico’s acequia systems and the agricultural, hydrological, biological, cultural, and social benefits they  
28 provide New Mexico’s communities.

29  
30 We strongly oppose the permanent transfer of any agricultural water right, whether surface or ground, from  
31 agriculture to any other use.

32  
33 We support water banking and leasing programs to protect agricultural water rights.

34  
35 We urge active participation and consultation of irrigating farmers and ranchers in the revision process of  
36 interstate stream compacts and state water plans. Further, interstate stream compact allocations should  
37 reflect percentages of actual available water rather than hypothetical quantity of water based on dated  
38 hydrological information.

39  
40 We support methods for water conservation and efficiency for water rights or other agricultural uses without  
41 revoking farmers’ and ranchers’ water rights for not using their allocated share under “use it or lose it”  
42 water policy clauses.

1 We urge all surface water compacts between New Mexico and other states be subject to review and possible  
2 re-negotiation considering recent developments for irrigation and municipal water projects. Current  
3 restrictions on acre-footage to be held by the state should be adjusted to reflect these issues.  
4

5 We support efforts to conserve water by removing invasive species such as salt cedar from all rivers and  
6 tributaries, including the Pecos, Rio Grande, Rio Chama, and Canadian Rivers.  
7

8 We recommend that groundwater compacts be negotiated with other states to address any future claims  
9 upon aquifers and basins.  
10

11 We support positions taken by the 22 water regions supporting regional water plans for future utilization of  
12 water resources.  
13

14 We support the creation of a water trust fund to ensure the state has adequate water resources and can  
15 defend its interests in lawsuits with neighboring states. Any losses incurred by New Mexico users should be  
16 fully compensated by the neighboring state or user that resides there.  
17

18 We urge the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer to not allow water to be monopolized by any entity  
19 and that it not eliminate permits for new drilling of water wells, including supplemental water wells, by  
20 surface rights owners.  
21

22 We urge that water wells are not drilled horizontally, and any that would be plugged with the owner fined  
23 based upon the length of well usage and volume of water removed.  
24

25 Water produced in the State of New Mexico will not be allowed to be transported outside of New Mexico. It  
26 must be put to beneficial use within the State of New Mexico.  
27

28 When disputes over surface water arise between states, ground water users near stream flows should not be  
29 penalized for loss of downstream flow.  
30

31 We oppose all initiatives to tax the use of water.  
32

33 We encourage best management practices for the release of water to increase habitat for threatened or  
34 endangered species.  
35

36 We encourage the New Mexico Office of the State Engineer to use its statutory authority to investigate and  
37 enforce the priority call of agricultural waters, rivers, and their tributaries.  
38

39 We oppose any efforts to divert agricultural use water to other uses without a full study and/or payment for  
40 loss of use.  
41

42 Agriculture water use should be equal to domestic priority use.  
43

44 We support water and water rights for the cultivation of food for New Mexicans.  
45

46 We support water reduction techniques.

1 We support the reuse of gray water.

2  
3 We support the use of domestic wells for limited commercial agricultural production for producers growing  
4 on one acre or less except where such strategies do not increase depletions, injure the integrity of aquifers,  
5 and with the caveat that use cannot exceed maximum allowed use.

6  
7 We support funding for increased oversight by the Office of the State Engineer to identify and prosecute  
8 those engaged in illegal water withdrawals from streams, acequias, and aquifers.

9  
10 We recommend that standards be adopted to deal with possible environmental contamination by industrial  
11 and corporate farms.

12  
13 We support the development of municipal water projects utilizing existing local reservoirs. We oppose the  
14 removal of dams on any river or destruction of any reservoir.

15  
16 We recognize the value, growth, and importance of the dairy industry to New Mexico. It is critical that this  
17 industry be a responsible user and conservator of water resources. It is also essential that this industry exercise  
18 due care to protect groundwater resources.

19  
20 We oppose efforts by the BLM and other federal agencies to force local irrigation districts to release water  
21 from reservoirs for habitat preservation without an impact study and public hearing. Producers losing the  
22 use of this water should be justly compensated for loss of production.

23  
24 We support the development of local water courts and mediation to settle adjudication claims.

25  
26 We oppose the transfer of groundwater out of the state of New Mexico, and support efforts to conserve  
27 water in the state.

28  
29 When groundwater is to be transferred out of state, an impact assessment and public hearing should be held.

30  
31 We oppose the transfer of surface water out of the state of New Mexico, and support effort to conserve  
32 water in the state.

33  
34 We support the metering of domestic wells, particularly when the use of these wells by commercial and  
35 residential properties is impacting agricultural operations.

36  
37 We oppose the practice of preliminary approvals of water right leases by New Mexico Office of the State  
38 Engineer without due process.

39  
40 We support water policy that ensures we are able to produce food in New Mexico for New Mexico  
41 consumption.

## 42 43 **2. Potable Water**

44 We support the development and completion of water projects by the affected communities as they see fit  
45 while protecting their water allocations.

1 We do not support the reduction of domestic well production below the three-acre feet per year level.

2  
3 We oppose the use of potable water in oil, gas, and mineral extraction and processing.

4  
5 **3. Wastewater**

6 We support the development of a fund for rural areas to give assistance with the mandated updating of  
7 septic tank disposal systems, and to assist older treatment systems to comply with current codes.

8  
9 We support the reuse of municipal wastewater for agricultural purposes with proper permitting and  
10 treatment.

11  
12 **4. Water Projects Financing**

13 We urge that any financing for water projects be used for their designated intent and not be diverted to other  
14 projects.

15  
16 We strongly support that the Water Trust Board review and recommend local water supply project  
17 applications and provide their list in order of highest priority and project readiness to the New Mexico State  
18 Legislature prior to the annual legislative session.

19  
20 **D. Property Rights**

21 We support property rights legislation on the state and federal level. Market or use value, whichever is  
22 greater, should be paid in any ‘taking’.

23  
24 We recognize water conservation as a bona fide use of surface and subsurface water rights.

25  
26 We support air space remaining as a part of the surface right estate.

27  
28 We support reasonable and fair compensation to surface owners for damage caused by mineral  
29 development. Compensation to the surface owner should include but not be limited to, loss of production  
30 income, lost land value, and lost access to surface owners remaining land, including loss of improvements.

31  
32 We support the affected landowners’ concerns being addressed when endangered species designations are  
33 made.

34  
35 We urge that New Mexico farmers and ranchers be appropriately compensated for land and water usage that  
36 is restricted because of the ESA, EPA programs, and other related agency programs.

37  
38 We support new transmission corridors with landowners being compensated in a fair and equitable fashion  
39 for the easement, including the option to include a multi-year payment.

40  
41 We do not support the use of eminent domain to transfer private property from a landowner to a for-profit or  
42 non-governmental entity without the landowner having the right to negotiate a multi-year payment.

43  
44 We do not support eminent domain proceedings for merchant projected corridors.



1 We encourage private property owners be part of the transmission planning process.

2  
3 We urge that a written agreement be in place prior to entry.

4  
5 We oppose any efforts to implement state-wide planning or zoning.

6  
7 We support surface rights protection.

8  
9 We oppose the mergers of city and county governments.

10  
11 **E. Predators and Pests**

12 We strongly support legal measures in the effort to restore effective predator control.

13  
14 We encourage the judicious use of cyanide guns on federal, state, and private lands to control coyotes and  
15 wolves to protect livestock.

16  
17 We urge New Mexico State University to do research on non-poisonous pest and predator control means.

18  
19 We urge the appropriation of federal funds to help control destructive birds because they are a serious crop  
20 and health hazard.

21  
22 We urge control of destructive insects and rodents on state land adjacent to cropland, using multiple  
23 resource methods, to encourage natural pollinators and beneficial wildlife.

24  
25 We support a producer-driven process for establishing and maintaining a healthy and balanced wildlife and  
26 agricultural system.

27  
28 We support USDA APHIS control of near plague-level pests.

29  
30 **F. Soil Health**

31 We strongly support efforts to increase soil health in the state of New Mexico. We urge NMDA and other  
32 state offices to recognize the importance of soil health, and to provide support and compensation to  
33 producers looking to implement new practices. Furthermore, we encourage ample recognition be given to  
34 the various cultures of New Mexico who have been stewarding these lands for centuries.

35  
36 We strongly support efforts in the agricultural industries to improve soil health and increase carbon  
37 sequestration, increased forage production, and water infiltration.

38  
39 We strongly support the full funding of the Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund for no less than  
40 \$350,000,000. The Fund was established during the 2023 legislative session as a source of money to be used  
41 as a non-federal match to fund restoration and maintain conservation projects.

42  
43 We support the Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund to be expanded beyond any specific agency to allow for  
44 any entity or individual to apply for funds.

1 We support all working farms and ranch lands that subscribe to basic soil health principles be allowed to  
2 participate in the governor’s 30x30 Conservation Plan.  
3

4 **G. Land Access**

5 We urge the State of New Mexico to recognize the importance of agricultural land transition planning,  
6 technical service provision, and working land conservation programs to ensure:

- 7 ➤ That land is affordable for the next generation, in particular for beginning, socially disadvantaged,  
8 and/or limited resource heir, and non-heir farmers or ranchers.
- 9 ➤ That agricultural land stay in agriculture in the hands of family farmers.
- 10 ➤ That transfer of skills and knowledge accompany transfer of land between current future generations  
11 of farmers and ranchers.
- 12 ➤ That the unique needs of tribes at the tribal, local, state, and federal levels are addressed.

13  
14 We support publicly funded conservation easement programs that prioritize agricultural easements that keep  
15 farms and ranches in production and owned by farmers and ranchers.  
16

17 We support programs and policies that help to resolve heir’s land ownership and succession issues because  
18 the State of New Mexico has adopted the Uniform Partition of Heirs Property Act (UPHPA).  
19

20 We strongly oppose converting agricultural land for domestic development.  
21

22 **Article VI. Energy Policy**

23 The positive economic impact on agriculture and rural communities through expanded tax bases, reduced  
24 outward migration of rural populations, and reduced dependence on fossil fuels, foreign oil, and traditional  
25 grain markets makes the continued development of viable renewable energy imperative. Therefore, we  
26 support and call for continued favorable legislation at the state and federal levels for the development of  
27 renewable energy resources.  
28

29 We encourage members and the public to support renewable energy resources.  
30

31 We support the building of the Tres Amigas project, a super conductor switching station in Curry County,  
32 New Mexico.  
33

34 We support the focus of economic development efforts to build the infrastructure and secondary facilities  
35 for new energy development, and to allow rural electric cooperatives to be part of the process.  
36

37 We strongly encourage the use of renewable energy products in state, county, and city vehicles.  
38

39 We support allowing REAs to increase net metering for agricultural operations and rural businesses.  
40

41 We support a revolving loan fund for renewable energy economic development projects.  
42

43 We urge information on carbon credit opportunities be made available to agricultural producers.  
44

45 We support a state tax credit for smaller renewable energy projects that is tradable.  
46

1 We support a personal property and sales tax exemption for renewable energy equipment and supplies.

2  
3 We recommend that intra-state prices of natural gas be reduced to compare with inter-state prices.

4  
5 We support the installation and operation of renewable energy systems with just compensation to the  
6 acreage owners.

7  
8 We support enactment of a state methane waste prevention rule.

9  
10 We urge that oil and gas property tax evaluations be audited and updated regularly and that the valuation,  
11 methods, and procedures for collection are both current and fair.

12  
13 We oppose any increase in gasoline taxes under the guise of a carbon tax.

14  
15 We support the monitoring of meters on oil and gas wells for purposes of severance tax collection.

16  
17 To protect our water, air, land, and the public's health, we support regulations that require that oil, gas, and  
18 mineral companies disclose all chemical compounds being used in the development, production, and  
19 processing of oil, gas, and minerals. We consider this a public safety requirement.

20  
21 We support all produced water from oil and gas development be reused by oil and gas before any other  
22 water. Before any produced water is used in agricultural production, producers must have assurance of the  
23 water quality.

24  
25 We support strong rules that eliminate energy waste and greenhouse gas emissions caused by routine  
26 venting and flaring.

27  
28 **A. Utilities**

29 We oppose any utility deregulation or regulation that results in higher cost to consumers.

30  
31 **Article VII. Economic & Social Policies**

32 **A. Taxes**

33 We support the current property tax program under which agricultural land is taxed on its ability to produce  
34 rather than on its sale value.

35  
36 We recommend that the tax level be maintained at 33 1/3 percent of the assessed value.

37  
38 Increased capital outlay costs should be paid for by taxes raised in an equitable fashion so that the burden  
39 will be borne by all segments of the economy.

40  
41 We recommend that a broader and more equitable state tax base be formulated and that a halt be made to  
42 increasing ad valorem taxes.

43  
44 We recommend that the state drop the sales or excise tax on farm machinery and agricultural production  
45 items.

1 We recommend that the mileage-use tax on farm trucks be eliminated, and a flat license fee be established  
2 and handled by the Motor Vehicle Department.

3  
4 We support one-tenth of a percentage of taxes collected by municipalities being used for economic  
5 development. Specifically, funds generated should be allocated to local economic development corporations  
6 for local business and cooperative development.

7  
8 We support moving one-tenth of the economic development tax and designating it specifically for rural  
9 economic development.

10  
11 We urge transparency and accountability regarding the revenues received from the tobacco lawsuit into New  
12 Mexico’s Tobacco Settlement Program Fund and Tobacco Settlement Permanent Fund.

13  
14 We urge the State of New Mexico to make a \$3 million commitment of tobacco settlement funds distributed  
15 from New Mexico’s Tobacco Settlement Permanent Fund to assist beginning farmers and start-up rural  
16 agricultural businesses with operational guaranteed loans and other financial assistance.

17  
18 We support updating agricultural valuation statute and regulation in order to better reflect the needs,  
19 practices and ecosystem benefits of agriculture and agricultural lands. Updates should include, but not be  
20 limited to:

- 21 ➤ Agricultural valuation for agricultural infrastructure;
- 22 ➤ Decreased minimum lot sizes;
- 23 ➤ Removal of requirement for contiguity for grazing lands;
- 24 ➤ Participation in state and federal conservation programs;
- 25 ➤ Cover cropping and other soil health practices; and,
- 26 ➤ For land that has been brought into production but has not yet produced a crop.

## 27 28 **B. Veterinarians**

29 We urge the State of New Mexico to establish a veterinary program. Until then, we urge New Mexico  
30 universities to work with other universities to accept more of our veterinary students.

31  
32 We encourage lottery monies to be used for tuition for veterinary students studying out of state due to the  
33 lack of an in-state program.

## 34 35 **C. Alternative Crops**

36 We strongly support research and development by private and public efforts to create industrial uses and  
37 markets for products produced on our farms, such as ethanol blended and bio-diesel fuels, medicines,  
38 protein supplements, and cosmetics, as well as other innovative uses needed by industry.

39  
40 We support the reintroduction of industrial hemp (defined as Cannabis Sativa), having one percent or less  
41 tetrahydrocannabinol (THC).

42  
43 We support research into the viability and economic potential of industrial hemp produced in the United  
44 States.

1 We encourage NMDA to continue to foster dialogue between GMO and non-GMO agricultural interests.

2  
3 **D. Urban Agriculture**

4  
5 We support municipalities adopting comprehensive rules to enable agriculture inside city limits (e.g.,  
6 zoning, permitting, and ag vehicles licensing).

7  
8 We support adding agriculture as a permitted use in all types of zoning.

9  
10 We support the creation of dedicated resources or offices within the NMDA that support urban agriculture.

11  
12 We support the classification of high tunnels as temporary as opposed to permanent structures with regard to  
13 municipal codes.

14  
15 We support ancillary structures in urban and peri-urban municipalities as an agricultural application as  
16 opposed to commercial industrial or residential including animal housing, shade, storage, fencing, and cold  
17 storage.

18  
19 We support the use of greenhouses and hoop houses/high tunnels for specialty crops as an agricultural  
20 application, as opposed to commercial or industrial, in urban and peri-urban municipalities.

21  
22 **E. Gun Control**

23 We oppose any legislation, on any and all levels, that infringes on our Second Amendment rights.

24  
25 We support all firearm education safety courses and safe and legal use of firearms.

26  
27 We support strict enforcement of existing laws.

28  
29 We oppose gun confiscation laws imposed upon U.S. citizens by any local, state, or federal agency.

30  
31 We oppose the ban on semiautomatic weapons.

32  
33 **F. Right to Work**

34 We believe right-to-work laws should be a state prerogative.

35  
36 We support the ability of employers to recover the cost of defending themselves when being falsely accused  
37 by employees of practices such as but not limited to harassment or discrimination based on race, age, sex.

38  
39 We oppose any common situs picketing bill.

40  
41 **G. Workers' Compensation**

42 We support collaborative and cooperative efforts to help reduce workers compensation rates and costs for  
43 family farms and ranches and seasonal industries.

1 We recommend that any worker’s compensation law recognize the unique nature of agriculture and provide  
2 an option for small employers to find other resourceful alternatives.  
3

#### 4 **H. State Education**

5 We support a fair and equitable formula for distributing state education funds.  
6

7 We support agriculture education, home economics, vocational-technical training programs, and other  
8 occupational preparation courses as an integral part of our free, public educational system.  
9

10 We support student loan repayment or forgiveness programs that are accessible and equitable for those who  
11 are in agricultural sectors.  
12

13 We encourage the review or study of school vouchers.  
14

15 We encourage better utilization of rural school systems and facilities by reversing the practice of busing  
16 students from rural areas to urban schools.  
17

18 We oppose diversion of principal from the permanent state fund for education.  
19

#### 20 **I. Local Food Purchasing**

21 We support efforts to incentivize the purchase of New Mexico agricultural products at a fair and just price  
22 across all sectors in New Mexico.  
23

##### 24 i. Ranch to Institution

25  
26 We support:

- 27 ➤ Expanding funding for institutions (schools, senior centers, etc.) to purchase local meat.
- 28 ➤ Requiring that all meat purchased be born, raised, finished, and if possible processed in New  
29 Mexico.
- 30 ➤ Allocating sufficient funds to pay producers a fair price based on the costs associated with  
31 producing meat in New Mexico.  
32

#### 33 **J. Emergency Powers**

34 We support amendment of the Emergency Powers Code to require emergency executive orders to terminate  
35 after 30 days if the Governor has not called for a special or extraordinary session.  
36

37 We support providing the legislature with the power to terminate emergency executive orders by concurrent  
38 resolution during a regular, special, or extraordinary session.  
39

### 40 **Article VIII. Rural Development Policies**

#### 41 **A. Rural Livelihood**

42 We support rural development that expands our present agriculture economic base and focuses on increasing  
43 infrastructure, value-added processing, and aggregation and distribution for agricultural crops and livestock  
44 and infrastructure for renewable energy.

1 We encourage an increase in the supply, distribution, and quality of New Mexico foods through food  
2 aggregation, and wholesale, retail, and infrastructure development while all the time providing healthy and  
3 safe food.

4  
5 We support New Mexico grown produce, agricultural products, and processing of New Mexico raised foods  
6 for school meals and other institutions to provide economic opportunities for New Mexico producers.

7  
8 We encourage private and public partnerships that support economic development in rural areas.

9  
10 We urge that health facilities and staffing be maintained and/or developed in rural communities, and support  
11 incentives to encourage staff to live and work in rural areas.

12  
13 We support reconsideration of the elimination and/or reassignment of National Guard units out of rural  
14 areas.

15  
16 We support the use of public funds to enhance the ability of local producers to add value to their agricultural  
17 products and urge the state to create consistent policies across county lines regarding Cottage Food Laws.

18  
19 We support efforts to expand the ability to process New Mexico meats within the state, to provide economic  
20 opportunities for both producers and processors.

21  
22 **ARTICLE IX. Tribal Lands**

23  
24 We urge the Department of Interior (DoI) to clarify existing and/or develop better agriculture land-use  
25 policies for farming and ranching in the protection of Native American land and water rights.

# WYOMING STATE POLICY

## Article I. Government Programs

### A. Game and Fish Department

We request the state Game and Fish Department be prohibited from introducing or transplanting predatory animals within the state.

We ask that trespass laws be strictly enforced.

We oppose the direct purchase of agricultural land by the Game and Fish Department; instead, they should consider leasing and/or buying easements.

We urge that landowners who allow hunting be compensated for forage consumed by wildlife and habitat utilized on private land. Compensation should be based on herd numbers and paid on average animal/unit/month values.

When wildlife numbers greatly exceed herd management objectives, game managers must institute measures to reduce these numbers as quickly as possible.

We urge that game coupons be retained.

We urge the Game and Fish Department to properly protect Wyoming's ungulate wildlife resources from the ever-increasing threat of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) and brucellosis.

We urge the Game and Fish Commission to compensate private landowners/lessees for wolf predation of livestock and animals guarding livestock in areas where the wolf is classified the same as other trophy game animals.

We oppose relocation of and habitat expansion for Bighorn Sheep when existing domestic sheep operations may be negatively impacted, particularly in the Sweetwater rocks region.

### B. Endangered Species Act

We support amending the ESA with input from affected landowners and tribal and elected officials from a large geographic area before getting a designation under the ESA.

We urge the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service require the use of the best available scientific data on population trends, available habitat, and genetic background in determining the listing and possible protection of any candidate species.

We support legislative delisting of the grizzly bear and all wolf species as specified in the ESA by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and barring judicial review.

We support continued efforts designed to keep prairie dogs off the endangered species list.

We oppose the listing of the Preble's meadow jumping mouse.



1 We applaud the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decision not to list the greater sage grouse and oppose any  
2 court actions to overturn that decision.

### 4 **C. Livestock Regulations –Wyoming Livestock Board**

5 We urge state livestock regulations be amended to require owner notification before mis-shipped livestock  
6 are sold.

7  
8 We oppose any fee increases for brand inspection until efficiencies in day-to-day operations are identified  
9 and instituted.

10  
11 We recommend landowners be able to file security interests against livestock to collect pasture and feed  
12 debt.

13  
14 We urge brand inspection on sheep be repealed when a more efficient method of ownership determination  
15 and predator fee assessment can be developed and implemented.

16  
17 We oppose the undue burden placed on livestock producers in the Designated Surveillance Area (DSA)  
18 Northwest Wyoming by the requirement of testing for brucellosis.

19  
20 We urge USDA APHIS rewrite brucellosis rules to remove brucella abortis from the select agent list to  
21 reflect lessened human health risks.

22  
23 We oppose the loss of a state’s brucellosis “free” status based only on infections traced and proven to be  
24 from wildlife.

25  
26 Producers’ fees for brand inspection should be set at a level to cover actual brand inspection program costs  
27 and not general administration, disease prevention or trace back costs.

28  
29 Any state beef check-off administered and collected under the Wyoming Livestock Board statutes must  
30 meet the following requirements:

- 31 ➤ All collections on sales will have a provision for refund;
- 32 ➤ Be approved by most producers voting on the referendum by mail, with spouses allowed to vote  
33 individually;
- 34 ➤ Disbursement of funds collected, and operations of the program are controlled by boards of  
35 producers elected by the producers assessed;
- 36 ➤ Major changes in existing check-off programs should be submitted to the producers affected and  
37 subject to approval by a two-thirds vote; and,
- 38 ➤ Programs being formulated or currently in operation be subject to a five-year review.

### 40 **D. Damage Notification Requirements**

41 People causing damage to property, and law enforcement officers investigating such damage, should be  
42 required to notify landowners of the damage and parties found guilty of causing the damage be required to  
43 pay for the damage.

1           **E. Mediation Service**

2 We support mediation between disputing parties to reach workable agreements.

3  
4           **F. Conflict of Interest**

5 We support legislation defining conflict of interest for legislators and elected officials.

6  
7           **G. Domestic Sheep Grazing**

8 We endorse the “Wyoming Plan” concerning domestic sheep vs. Big Horn sheep grazing conflicts.

9  
10           **H. Superintendent of Public Instruction**

11 We support maintaining the position of Superintendent of Public Instruction as an elected position.

12  
13 **Article II. Water, Land, and Conservation Policies**

14           **A. Water Law**

15 We encourage the wise use and conservation of underground water between states.

16  
17 We oppose the backdating of water rights.

18  
19 We urge the Wyoming State Legislature prohibit the permanent transfer in use of any existing agricultural  
20 water rights to commercial industrial uses.

21  
22 We recommend that the sale of adjudicated irrigation water be limited to agricultural uses.

23  
24 We oppose allowing holders of water rights to sell any or part of such rights for nonagricultural uses.

25  
26 We oppose all actions to take water being used for agricultural purposes.

27  
28 We oppose any privately held water rights being used for instream flow purposes.

29  
30           **B. Utilization of Water**

31 We urge the limited remaining water resources allocated to the state of Wyoming be developed under law  
32 for beneficial use in the state, with special emphasis upon maximizing reservoir storage of surface water.

33  
34 We recognize the desirability of protecting the high quality of our waters and assuring their suitability for  
35 beneficial uses, and support legislation to do so.

36  
37 We urge the State of Wyoming to encourage and assist in the development of economically feasible  
38 innovative technology and incentives oriented toward efficient uses of the waters in this state when they do  
39 not injure vested water rights.

40  
41 We support the concept of storing and beneficially using all unappropriated Wyoming water within the state  
42 in accordance with existing Wyoming water law.

43  
44 We oppose granting underground or other supplemental water rights to land where the surface water rights  
45 have been sold.

1           **C. Water Project Funding**

2 We urge additional funding be made available, including all federal stimulus sources for the immediate  
3 construction and rehabilitation of water projects state-wide.

4  
5 We oppose the ongoing raiding of Water Development Funds for the operation of the State Board of Control  
6 and urge these funds be made whole.

7  
8 We urge the Governor, Legislators, and agencies tasked with regulation and funding of water infrastructure  
9 undertake a comprehensive study, not funded in any way by an irrigation district or company, of the  
10 structural condition and needs of water delivery systems allowing irrigation districts or companies to choose  
11 their own type and/or form of participation.

12  
13 We urge funding is identified and committed to these needs to help ensure water deliveries aren't disrupted  
14 at a critical time for crops in the future.

15  
16 We urge structures with the highest need or repair are ranked and contracts issued to facilitate these repairs.

17  
18           **D. North Platte River**

19 We urge that the proposed enlargement of water storage as part of the Platte River Cooperative Agreement  
20 on the North Platte River and its tributaries be completed.

21  
22           **E. Municipal Water**

23 Wyoming municipalities and schools should be required to submit a report to the State Board of Control on  
24 the amount of potable water used to irrigate park grounds and rights-of-ways urged to consider using gray  
25 water and dryland grass varieties instead of irrigated grass varieties where feasible.

26  
27           **F. Water Quality**

28 Water produced in methane development must meet state water quality standards for surface water  
29 discharge.

30  
31 Laws requiring mitigation of impacts associated with coal-bed methane water must be established to protect  
32 adjacent landowners.

33  
34 We support existing water quality standards affecting agriculture, livestock, and wildlife and feel no  
35 changes are necessary.

36  
37           **G. Land Use**

38 Wyoming statutes provide for comprehensive planning and zoning on a countywide basis, covering  
39 unincorporated areas. The following statutory revisions should be made by the Wyoming State Legislature:

- 40       ➤ Planning and zoning decisions should be made as close to the people affected as possible.
  - 41       ➤ Prohibit the state from preempting local decision-making except where land use is clearly not just a  
42       local concern.
  - 43       ➤ Although we recognize the need for industrial expansion and the purchase of land for industry, we  
44       strongly oppose the acquisition of productive agricultural land for non-agricultural uses.
- 45

1           **H. Recycling**

2           The state should encourage all forms of recycling by requiring a deposit on all non-biodegradable recyclable  
3           materials.

4  
5           We support a statewide recycling project.  
6

7           **I. Reclamation**

8           We support passage of a reclamation statute to enforce agreed upon reclamation plans to protect private  
9           landowners and the environment. All projects requiring reclamation should include bonding requirements to  
10          insure completion.  
11

12          **J. Noxious Weed Control**

13          We support stronger enforcement of state laws to control declared noxious weeds and pests and require each  
14          county to control declared noxious weeds and pests on all lands, with stiff penalties for noncompliance.  
15

16          We request the re-establishment of a “state cost share” to aid in controlling prairie dogs and/or noxious  
17          weeds.  
18

19          **Article III. Energy Policy**

20               **A. Mineral Rights**

21          We recommend that 25-year time limits be established on ownership of severed mineral rights, including  
22          those retained by the state. After this period, mineral rights ownership shall revert to the surface owner in all  
23          cases where present production of minerals is not occurring.  
24

25          We urge that the decision to allow mining and oil companies the use of private lands should lay with the  
26          surface owner, and in all cases, compensatory payments should be made to the landowner for all damages  
27          incurred.  
28

29               **B. Leases**

30          We support changes in existing law to require prior consent be obtained from surface rights owners before a  
31          lease may be acquired by mineral companies to develop minerals.  
32

33               **C. Oil and Gas**

34          We urge caution in the development of CBM and request all available technology be used in development  
35          and reclamation of products and by-products.  
36

37          We urge caution in the development of all producing formations and request all available technology and  
38          best management practices be used in the development, production, and reclamation of oil and gas products  
39          and by-products.  
40

41          We oppose the practice of extending and renewing drilling permits by the Wyoming Oil and Gas  
42          Conservation Commission unless exploration activity has occurred under the initial drilling permit.  
43

44          We oppose the practice of allowing a minority mineral owner to dictate oil and gas development unless all  
45          owners are under lease.

1           **D. Alternative Energy**

2 We support renewable energy production within Wyoming.

3  
4 We support an RPS for Wyoming.

5  
6 We encourage state-assisted community-sized bio-fuels development and production.

7  
8 We support renewable energy development and storage rights remaining with the surface rights.

9  
10 We support reserving a percentage of the capacity of any publicly funded transmission line for power  
11 generated from renewable sources.

12  
13 We urge new transmission line routes be sited to maximize wind power opportunities.

14  
15 We support state research into alternative crops for bio-fuels use.

16  
17 We encourage the individual and cooperative development and ownership of wind energy and co-generation  
18 production; in cases of development, we support fair reimbursements to landowners.

19  
20 We support sequestration of carbon, where safety and stability can be assured.

21  
22 We strongly support the ownership of pore space remain with the surface owner.

23  
24 **Article IV. Economic & Social Policies**

25           **A. Education Policy**

26 We recommend the continuation of an elected school board in sub-district areas.

27  
28 We support short-term borrowing from permanent funds to assist in education funding shortfalls, with the  
29 intention these monies be paid back when funds become available.

30  
31 We support the organization of a Farmers Union local for students at the University of Wyoming.

32  
33 We stress the primacy of academics over athletics at all levels of education,

34  
35 When state school funding reductions are necessary, local districts need to be able to identify their own  
36 areas of cutbacks.

37  
38 All state education programs mandated for local districts by the State of Wyoming must have accompanying  
39 funding.

40  
41 We urge local input be considered when adopting statewide assessments.

42  
43 We urge all schools to offer a strong agriculture and vocational education curriculum.

44  
45 We encourage a statewide mill levy to support community colleges.

1 We support funding increases for STEM programs.

2  
3 We recommend testing at the local level be recognized as a measure of proficiency to guarantee that  
4 Wyoming state standards and benchmarks are met.

## 5 6 **B. Tax Policy**

### 7 **1. Ad Valorem Taxes**

8 We urge sales tax on food be reinstated before any other general tax increases be instituted.

9  
10 We support ag operations in recognized beginning farmer/rancher programs or marketing their products  
11 “farm to table” receive a five-year exemption from meeting the gross sales requirement to qualify for ag  
12 land classification.

13  
14 We urge the continuation of the gas tax credit for agricultural production. Agricultural operations should be  
15 allowed a five-year average to meet the dollar criteria in qualifying for the credit.

16  
17 We oppose the elimination of the state fuel tax for mileage-based tax.

18  
19 We urge implementation and enforcement of the current alternative fuel tax.

20  
21 We urge the State of Wyoming review its assessment procedures in mineral production to make sure they  
22 reflect verifiable production figures, not company self-assessments.

23  
24 We are opposed to a state income tax for Wyoming.

25  
26 We oppose a property tax exemption for business and business investment in the free enterprise system  
27 made by churches and religious groups.

28  
29 We urge the abolishment of payment of taxes under protest.

30  
31 We encourage the state to continue to use a three-tier property tax system, with ag lands, residential and all  
32 other remaining on the same tier.

### 33 34 **2. Wyoming Inheritance Tax**

35 We oppose a state inheritance and/or estate tax.

36  
37 Until these taxes are abolished, we urge tax reform that will allow the value of farm and grazing lands to be  
38 based on the productivity of such lands for gift and inheritance tax purposes.

### 39 40 **3. Sales and Use Tax**

41 We believe that noncommercial sales should be exempt from state sales tax.

42  
43 We ask the Wyoming State Legislature to exempt agricultural parts and supplies from sales tax.

1 We propose that personal property tax be abolished on agricultural equipment. We strongly support the  
2 exemption of farm equipment from sales tax.  
3

#### 4 **4. Vehicle Registration**

5 Taxes and licensing requirements on seasonal-use farm vehicles should correspond with length of time in  
6 use.  
7

8 We oppose any increase in vehicle registration fees.  
9

10 We support a one-time registration fee for trailers.  
11

#### 12 **5. Severance Tax**

13 We support existing severance and mineral tax rates.  
14

#### 15 **C. Worker's Compensation**

16 We strongly urge that worker's compensation for farmers and ranchers continue to be optional.  
17

#### 18 **D. Warehouse Law**

19 The issuance of warehouse receipts should be mandatory, and the warehouse receipts should post all  
20 handling, cleaning, and storage charges, pro-rated on actual tare and purity as well as all other information  
21 now required by Wyoming law.  
22

23 We encourage the Wyoming State Legislature to take whatever action is necessary to ensure that the stored  
24 commodities shall remain the property of the owners that delivered the commodities for storage in the case  
25 of bankruptcy of the warehouse.  
26

27 We recommend warehouses be required to issue warehouse receipts no later than 45 days from the date of  
28 original delivery as shown by scale tickets or upon request. The scale delivery tickets should be considered  
29 proof of ownership until sale, or the warehouse receipt has been issued. Warehouse receipts shall be issued  
30 on all producer-owned commodities prior to leaving the state. When a warehouse certifies itself as empty,  
31 an automatic audit will be triggered regardless of whether the license is renewed or not.  
32

33 We demand that commodities stored in warehouses be inspected bi-annually for quality as well as quantity,  
34 and more frequently and unannounced as deemed necessary.  
35

#### 36 **E. Grain Indemnity Fund**

37 We oppose any grain indemnity fund.  
38

#### 39 **F. State Land and Investment Board**

40 We recommend the State Land and Investment Board (SLIB) continue making direct real estate loans to  
41 producers.  
42

43 We urge the SLIB to allow irrigation loans to finance renewable energy power systems for irrigation  
44 practices.  
45

1 We oppose the sale of state school lands. Any sale of state land shall be scrutinized in regard to maintaining  
2 a balance, both geographically and economically.

3  
4 We recognize state trust lands are not “public lands” and the public has no inherent right to access.

5  
6 All users should have fees established for use of state school trust lands.

7  
8 We urge that current lessees maintain their preferential right when renewing their current lease(s).

9  
10 We urge the reestablishment of beginning farmer/rancher loan allocation within the existing farm loan fund.

11  
12 **Article V. Rural Development Policies**

13 We welcome economic development that complements our present economic base rather than jeopardizes it.

14  
15 We ask the Wyoming State Legislature to provide incentives for rural communities to establish agricultural  
16 commodities and biofuels processing within the state.

17  
18 We urge the state’s economic development efforts be directed toward small community projects.

19  
20 We urge economic development in Wyoming be focused on attracting clean industries, paying a living  
21 wage.

22  
23 We support the ability for producers to market their commodities and value-added products to consumers  
24 direct and through other markets.

25  
26 We support efforts to expand market opportunities like those allowed by the Wyoming Food Freedom Act.

27  
28 **A. Landowner Reimbursement**

29 We support full landowner and fire district reimbursement for damages and fire suppression costs on both  
30 public and private properties caused by railroads.



1 **2024 Rocky Mountain Farmers Union Special Order of Business**

2  
3 **Historically Underserved Farmers and Ranchers in Urban and**  
4 **Peri-Urban Areas**  
5

6 **Whereas**, many urban and peri-urban farmers and ranchers are historically underserved (socially  
7 disadvantaged, beginning, limited resource, and veteran farmers and ranchers), and

8  
9 **Whereas**, a just, equitable, and sustainable food and farming system ensures that all people live with dignity  
10 and freedom from discrimination and exploitation, and

11  
12 **Whereas**, historically underserved producers and women often face increased barriers due to their urban  
13 and peri-urban property location and/or nontraditional farm household, and

14  
15 **Whereas**, farm and ranch insurance policies won't be written due to restrictive zoning.

16  
17 **Therefore, be it resolved**, RMFU urges government programs, on federal, state, county, and municipal  
18 levels, to be designed to include and benefit urban and peri-urban farmers with small acreage farming and  
19 ranching, including under an acre, such as:

- 20
- 21 • USDA farm programs
  - 22 • Crop and animal insurance
  - 23 • Conservation programs
  - 24 • Farm lending programs
  - 25 • Mental health programs
  - 26 • Peer to peer mentoring programs
  - 27 • Water rates for producers
  - 28 • Zoning, permitting, and licensing
- 29

1 **2023 Rocky Mountain Farmers Union (New Mexico) Special Order of**  
2 **Business**

3  
4 **New Mexico Game and Fish**  
5 **EPLUS System**  
6

7 **Whereas**, the New Mexico State Game and Fish (NMG&F) has a program called Elk Private Land Use  
8 System (EPLUS) the goal of which is to: “Establish an equitable and flexible system that recognizes the  
9 contributions of private lands and landowners to the management of elk and their habitats, while providing  
10 hunting opportunities on private lands, and to support appropriate, biologically sound, and effective harvest  
11 goals set by the department for elk.”

12  
13 **Whereas**, the EPLUS system and the management of game is overseen by the New Mexico Game  
14 Commissions, which has not held a quorum in over a year and is not effectively managing the EPLUS  
15 program according to its original intent.

16  
17 **Whereas**, the management of game animals by NMG&F and the Game commission is largely disconnected  
18 from sound monitoring and clear management goals in much of the state and places undue burden on many  
19 land owners to prove their contribution to the management of Elk and elk habitat, while effectively  
20 privatizing over half of all hunting permits for the primary benefit of wealthy trophy hunters instead of  
21 farmers, ranchers, public and private land, or the general public.

22  
23 **Whereas**, the elk population has rebounded to the point elk impact on both public and private land  
24 necessitates a comprehensive, inclusive, and rigorous management framework to balance the interests of the  
25 public owners of the elk herd, the farmers, ranchers, and land managers working on both public and private  
26 lands, private landowners, all while working to increasing the health of the ecosystems being managed.

27  
28 **Therefore, be it resolved**, we strongly support reforming the New Mexico Game Commission to ensure  
29 that it will function effectively, free from political influence or control, to steward wild game in New  
30 Mexico for the benefit of the public, and especially for the benefit of the farmers, ranchers, and land  
31 managers who are most impacted by the elk herd.

32  
33 **Therefore, be it further resolved**, we strongly support requiring the inclusion of a minimum of two land  
34 managers actively engaged in farming or ranching in New Mexico on the game commission.

35  
36 **Therefore, be it further resolved**, we strongly urge depredation hunts in January to ensure population  
37 targets set by game management plans are met.

38  
39 **Therefore, be it further resolved**, we support managing the elk herd in New Mexico primarily as a source  
40 of meat for New Mexicans, and insist that the allocation of hunting permits to private land owners be tied to  
41 the real benefit afforded to the public elk herb by their land management practices.  
42