

Rocky Mountain Farmers Union 2024 Path To Policy

One of the best things about Rocky Mountain Farmers Union is that it derives its policy not from the top down, but rather democratically from the input of its members. Even better, this process happens every year. This system is rooted in RMFU's fundamental vision to create "a world in which farm families and their communities are respected, valued, and enjoy economic prosperity and social justice". In an ever-changing world, it also ensures that policies are in-tune with current member needs. These policies are written down in a document we commonly refer to as the Policy Book. The way this process unfolds is via weeks of policy committees and county conventions which then culminate in our tri-state RMFU Annual Convention in November. This same process is followed at every other state or regional chapter of the National Farmers Union.

Each year, typically in the summer after the legislative session has ended in our three states, the RMFU Policy Committee meets. The Policy Committee is composed of the RMFU Vice President, one RMFU Board Member, and a representative from each of RMFU's seven districts. They review the policies from the previous year and discuss any updates to recommend for consideration at the Annual Convention. If you have questions or suggestions for the Policy Committee, please feel free to reach out to the Policy Committee representative for your district.

The RMFU Policy Committee has released the 2024 RMFU Redline Policy Book for member consideration at the 2024 RMFU Annual Convention in Colorado Springs from November 21st to November 23rd. The RMFU Redline Policy Book and other information can be found at https://rmfu.org/wp-content/uploads/2024-RMFU-Redline-Policy-Manual_8-9-24.pdf

Your 2024 Policy Committee Members include:

District 1 - Gordon Westhoff

District 2 - Theresa Schuller

District 3 - Hanne Wellborn

District 5 - Sam Schmidt

District 6 - Amanda Weaver

District 7 - Zach Withers

At-Large - Sarah Cole Lewis

Policy Committee Chair – RMFU Vice President Nick Perchess

RMFU Board Representative – District V Director Emily Brown

The Path to Policy also runs through our county conventions for each county chapter within RMFU. At county conventions, members discuss new and old business relevant to the chapter, elect eligible chapter leadership positions, and discuss policy. It is possible for county chapters to form their own policy committees, and any member can submit policy change proposals at county convention. These policy change proposals may suggest new policies to add to our policy book or identify current policies to delete or amend. County conventions are also an important opportunity to sign up as delegates to attend the Annual Convention. Delegates who

attend the Annual Convention will get to vote on the policy change proposals submitted by members.

It is possible to both sign up as a delegate (assuming your county chapter still has available delegate spots) and also to submit policy suggestions outside of the county conventions if you cannot attend. There is a policy change form, copies of which are available on our website or by request via email, that any member may fill out. Please submit one form per policy change, and please feel free to submit as many as you think are necessary within reason.

All proposals must be submitted to Tyler Garrett no later than Wednesday, November 6 for consideration. Email him at tyler.garrett@rmfu.org.

After the November 6 deadline, members may still propose policy language directly to delegates on the floor at convention.

The final step is for delegates at the RMFU Annual Convention to vote on proposed policy changes. The RMFU Policy Committee will debate proposals and develop an addendum for delegate consideration on the afternoon of Thursday, November 21 in Colorado Springs. Members are welcome to present the rationale for previously submitted policy proposals during this meeting. They can also provide a brief written rationale to accompany their proposals. While any member can speak on the floor at the Annual Convention and propose policy, only delegates can vote. This year's Annual Convention is November 21st-November 23rd. We will have a detailed agenda for the convention soon. The policy voting process at Annual Convention determines which proposed changes to the RMFU Policy Book are approved or rejected.

Whether you serve on a policy committee, attend a county convention, submit policy change forms, or propose changes in person at the Annual Convention, your voice is crucial to the work RMFU does. Our staff, including the government relations team, uses the policies decided through this process to determine which legislative causes deserve RMFU's support. RMFU does not get involved in any legislative issue unless there is RMFU policy as to what our members' position is on the issue.

To recap, as a member, you have several options to bring forward a policy idea for consideration. You can work with your county chapter, you can go through your policy committee member, you can email submissions to Tyler via the policy change proposal form, or you can propose your idea directly to RMFU delegates at our Annual Convention in Colorado Springs from November 21st to November 23rd.

