

FEDERAL priority issues

A NEW DIRECTION IN THE NEXT FARM BILL

Most of the programs included in the 2008 farm bill expire in 2012. As we debate and write the next farm bill, the discussion has centered around major budget limits prompting a discussion about fundamental farm program change. In response, new Farm Bureau policy has been approved that states the next farm bill should center on programs that; provide a strong safety net that does not guarantee a profit, but instead protects producers from catastrophic revenue losses while minimizing the potential for farm programs to affect production decisions; be based on planted rather than historic acres; allows flexibility to plant in response to market demand; allow for the purchasing of insurance to further protect individual risk; are available for producers of all crops; maintain funding for conservation programs; consider the needs of the specialty crop industry and retain marketing loans. OFBF will educate Ohio farmers on new farm program options and engage with policymakers to influence the adoption on new programs that best serve Ohio farmers.

SECURE A NEW DAIRY SAFETY NET

A new direction in dairy policy is needed to protect against milk price volatility. Recent years have seen both historical but short-term highs and devastating longer-term lows in milk prices. Farm Bureau recognizes that dairy price support and the Milk Income Loss Contract programs have not worked and that the organization will look for new policy options that will better serve farmers. Farm Bureau will seek to change and improve dairy policy either as part of a new farm bill or as stand-alone legislation.

REGULATORY OVERSIGHT AND REDUCE REGULATORY BURDENS

Farm Bureau is opposing proposed changes to on-farm

youth labor standards. The proposed new rules by the Department of Labor would modify existing exemptions and restrict many opportunities for youth to actively engage and be employed on farms. We are also working with Congress and the Department of Labor to improve the agricultural guest worker program and to protect agricultural employers from additional burdensome requirements. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is currently pushing a series of new regulations forward which will impact Ohio farmers. These pesticide, air and water quality proposals will place new costly rules on farmers and rural communities. Farm Bureau will engage with the agencies to reduce the impact of these and any new rules or legally engage if other options fail.

TAX POLICY AND BUDGET

With successful passage of legislation late in 2010 to extend estate tax exemptions for two years, Farm Bureau will continue to educate Congress on the importance of this tax relief and ask for these exemptions to be made



permanent. We support elimination of the estate tax. Its impact on succession planning for family farms is devastating.

FOOD QUALITY AND SAFETY

Food safety is an important national investment with many benefits. With the passage of new food safety legislation late in 2010, Farm Bureau will engage to assure the implantation of this new law will not adversely burden farmers. We will continue to work to improve our food safety system based on sound science, and must educate consumers to increase understanding of the factors that impact food price and quality. We have the safest, most abundant food supply in the world; let's keep it that way.

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Priority Issues

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