

**OHIO FARM BUREAU
FEDERATION**

**2015
STATE POLICIES**

**RESOLUTIONS ON STATE ISSUES ADOPTED BY THE VOTING
DELEGATES OF THE OHIO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION
96TH ANNUAL MEETING**

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SECTION 1: GOVERNANCE, ENERGY & LABOR

SECTION 1: GOVERNANCE, ENERGY & LABOR

FARM BUREAU

Ohio Farm Bureau

101

1 The Ohio Farm Bureau Federation is an independent, voluntary organization of Ohio
 2 farmers and community stakeholders who are members of member Farm Bureaus. Basic
 3 democratic principles are used throughout to govern the organization. Farm Bureau
 4 fosters responsible citizenship and is proud to be respected as an opinion leader
 5 throughout rural and urban Ohio.

6 The farm family is the backbone of the organization and the organization is strong
 7 because of the active support and involvement of its membership. The membership
 8 involves all races, ages, sexes, commodities, religious beliefs, and political interests.

9 We will continue to assist member Farm Bureaus in expanding their total programs as
 10 they seek solutions to local problems important to farmers and rural Ohio. We encourage
 11 counties to maximize their effort in getting more farmers and community stakeholders to
 12 join the organization. We encourage counties to conduct outreach and education for
 13 associate members so that they can better understand Farm Bureau and agriculture. We
 14 encourage Farm Bureau members to be more knowledgeable of issues, be more involved
 15 in their county and state organization and be advocates for agriculture.

16 We support the *Our Ohio* brand and encourage its further development by Farm
 17 Bureau and its members as a means to better connect with consumers and associate
 18 members. We will continue to develop, implement, create and support programs that
 19 seek to improve the public perception and image of all segments of production
 20 agriculture. We will continue to support mechanisms that promote and utilize *Our Ohio*
 21 initiatives as a more prominent membership marketing tool.

22 We support the county and state farm bureaus to place the words “Buy American” on
 23 all Farm Bureau publications and websites.

24 We encourage the expanded use of social media as an effective communications tool
 25 to achieve our mission.

26 The amount of dues varies from county to county. New members should be accepted
 27 in their county of residence, with the exception that absentee landowners might be
 28 accepted in the county of their farm location.

29 By affiliating with Farm Bureaus in 49 other states and Puerto Rico in the American
 30 Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) we are able to present a strong and united approach to
 31 the problems facing rural America.

32 We support funding and programs conducted by the Ohio Farm Bureau Family of
 33 Foundations, that includes the Ohio Farm Bureau Foundation, the Animals for Life
 34 Foundation and the Ohio Center on Agricultural Law.

Leadership Development

102

1 Ohio Farm Bureau is committed to the long-term personal and professional leadership
 2 development of its members, youth and young agricultural professionals. By creating,
 3 facilitating and encouraging leadership programs, such as Young Ag Professionals and

4 AgriPOWER, within Ohio Farm Bureau and cooperating with allied organizations, we
5 will develop strong leaders for our organization, community and agricultural industry.

6 The Ohio Farm Bureau Youth Program should be encouraged, supported and
7 expanded. We should explore and expand youth leadership development opportunities
8 that reflect the Ohio Farm Bureau mission with like-minded groups outside the
9 organization.

10 We support creation and expansion of Community Councils to enhance
11 communication, collaboration and leadership development opportunities between
12 members and their respective county Farm Bureau.

Farmer and Consumer Partnership

103

1 We will continue to work to better inform consumers about all aspects of agriculture
2 through all means of communications. We understand that consumers need to be better
3 connected to all aspects of food, fiber and energy production, from the farm level to the
4 grocery store, restaurant, farm market or other point of sale. At the same time, we
5 recognize that to forge a partnership means to be good listeners as well. We encourage
6 Farm Bureau members to better understand the consumer perspective and adopt a
7 customer service mindset as a step toward forging a partnership.

8 We support ongoing efforts to engage the public about the importance of all animals
9 in society and the benefits from this relationship between people and animals that are
10 essential to the health and well-being of both.

Nationwide

104

1 We are proud of the fact that Nationwide was founded by Farm Bureau and remains
2 an important part of our family. We still believe the principles of a mutual company
3 must consider the needs and wants of its policyholders as part of its corporate
4 management.

5 We encourage continued effectiveness as partners by promoting the aims and services
6 of our organizations among our employees, our members, our policyholders and, when
7 appropriate, the Ohio public. Emphasis should continue in providing channels for
8 communication between various segments of our organizations to assure maximum
9 understanding of organizational ties.

10 We support Nationwide's effort to be the premier agricultural insurer in the country.
11 We urge them to take an innovative and comprehensive approach that addresses the risk
12 management needs of a changing agricultural industry, including the types of exposure
13 farm and ranch policy holders will need to address as they enter business relationships
14 with other types of energy service providers.

15 We support a farm vehicle used in custom operations being insured under a farm
16 policy when the majority of use of that vehicle is for personal farm use.

17 We recommend that our members avail themselves of the full line of products offered
18 by Nationwide. In order to facilitate our members' use of these services, we recommend
19 Nationwide continue its policy of making agents available in all 88 counties.

20 We encourage Nationwide to utilize the experience and knowledge of their agents in
21 setting policy and procedures with the goal of benefiting both Nationwide and its
22 policyholders.

23 Recognizing the significance of Farm Bureau members' rates for automobile and
 24 truck insurance, we encourage member Farm Bureaus to conduct at least one program per
 25 year on vehicular safety.

26 We in Farm Bureau support continuing territorial rating in pricing insurance
 27 premiums.

Medical Mutual of Ohio

105

1 Ohio Farm Bureau should continue to work with Medical Mutual of Ohio (MMO) to
 2 develop quality and affordable health insurance solutions for farmers and business
 3 owners.

4 We encourage Medical Mutual of Ohio to enter into agreements across state lines to
 5 allow OFBF members who use out of state healthcare providers to be able to utilize
 6 MMO.

AGRICULTURE

Ohio Agriculture

111

1 We support increased opportunities for agriculture to continue to grow as Ohio's
 2 number one industry. We are concerned about economic development and quality of life
 3 issues unique to urban, suburban, and rural communities, and the agricultural
 4 opportunities available to each. Therefore, we will support reasonable efforts and needed
 5 research to address local issues including, but not limited to, water quantity and quality,
 6 air quality, physical, social, communication, energy and utility infrastructure, and the
 7 adoption of Best Management Practices (BMP's) pertaining to these issues. Identifying
 8 needed research, compiling and distributing research data, and funding of these activities
 9 should be emphasized to enhance our ability to address the concerns and questions of
 10 farmers and neighbors.

11 We encourage all government officials, state and local, to recognize and promote
 12 agriculture and agricultural jobs as an economic development tool for Ohio including an
 13 agricultural component in JobsOhio. Greater emphasis should be placed on promoting
 14 the agricultural industry domestically and internationally.

15 We support a review of all state economic development activities to ensure consistent
 16 funding, support and project efficiency for agriculture and rural communities.

17 We will work with the administration to develop a positive business climate in Ohio
 18 including references to job creation efforts in the Ohio Department of Agriculture and
 19 Ohio Agricultural Statistics Annual Report.

20 We support the production methods and use of genetically modified and organically
 21 based products.

22 We oppose attempts to limit the production or use of genetically modified crops or
 23 livestock.

Ohio Department of Agriculture

112

1 The position of Director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture should be maintained
 2 as a Governor's cabinet level position and the agency should be operated as a stand-alone
 3 part of state government, focusing on issues pertaining to food, fiber and fuel,

4 production/safety, environmental quality and natural resource (soil and water)
5 conservation.

6 We will continue to work for appropriate funding for the Ohio Department of
7 Agriculture and maintain the importance of the department in its role in the health and
8 safety of all Ohioans. ODA regulatory efforts for public health and safety should be a
9 budgeted expense of ODA and funded by the general fund.

10 All fees assessed for programs and services provided by the agency should be at a
11 reasonable cost and retained within the department.

12 We support implementation of the legislation establishing a fuel quality testing
13 program, including necessary funding.

Farm Service Agency

113

1 We support adequate staffing of all county Farm Service Agency offices. Staffing
2 levels should be established based on the total workload of each local office or budgetary
3 constraints and we recognize that this could result in county office consolidation. County
4 committees should be consulted on any proposed office change; workload and distances
5 between offices should be a factor when considering consolidation.

6 We support a viable county committee system as an integral part of administering
7 Farm Service Agency programs and encourage an expanded role for this valuable source
8 of local input.

9 The Farm Service Agency should have all county offices follow the same procedures
10 for consistency and accept reports from other counties and agencies.

Agricultural Financing

114

1 We support the farmer-owned and controlled Farm Credit System and encourage our
2 members to utilize it.

3 We support expansion of Ag-LINK; the State of Ohio Linked Deposit Program
4 designed to serve agriculture. We support the current level of \$150,000 and encourage
5 periodic review to ensure program effectiveness.

6 We encourage potential borrowers as well as lending institutions to explore and use
7 Farmer Mac programs for purchases of agricultural real estate and/or farm homes.

8 We support the establishment of credit and/or venture capital for newly developed
9 farmer-sponsored marketing programs.

10 We support statewide line item funding for Resource Conservation and Development
11 Councils for the state budget.

12 We support the state of Ohio expanding participation of non-depository Farm Credit
13 Services beyond Ag-LINK to include all state sponsored lending programs designed to
14 support farming and agribusiness.

Cooperatives

115

1 We encourage the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation and member Farm Bureaus to
2 cultivate a good relationship with all cooperatives. We encourage cooperatives to seek
3 ways to meet the changing needs of their members. We support increased efforts to
4 educate farmers and consumers about the benefits and business structure of cooperative
5 membership, leadership development and patronage.

ELECTIONS

Term Limits 121

- 1 We support extending the term limit for state legislators to 12 years.
 2 We support extending the term length for a state representative from two years to four
 3 years and extending the term length for a state senator from four to six years.

Political Campaigns 122

- 1 We support the enforcement of existing campaign finance laws and encourage the
 2 examination of further campaign finance reform.
 3 We support legislation to prohibit the solicitation of contributions at the time of
 4 gathering signatures for an initiative petition.
 5 We oppose contributions to political campaigns from foreign interests.
 6 We encourage political candidates to campaign on the issues and avoid negative
 7 campaigning.
 8 We support full disclosure of all campaign contributions.

Political Education 123

- 1 Farmers should become better informed and seek elected office or become actively
 2 involved in politics and government at the local, state, and national levels.
 3 Many candidates for public office and many issues on the ballot are deserving of
 4 farmers' financial support. The Agriculture for Good Government Political Action
 5 Committee (AGGPAC) must rely on individual members for contributions since
 6 organization funds cannot legally be used. More funds should be generated to support or
 7 oppose issues on the ballot and to make contributions to deserving candidates who
 8 support Farm Bureau policy.
 9 The Ohio Farm Bureau should:
 10 1. Operate AGGPAC on a bi-partisan basis;
 11 2. Encourage the members to participate as individuals in political party activities
 12 and serve in various capacities of the political party structure. More farmer
 13 involvement in our political parties is seriously needed to strengthen and keep the
 14 parties responsive to the best interest of agriculture and rural communities;
 15 3. Provide convenient opportunities for members to voluntarily contribute to
 16 AGGPAC;
 17 4. Encourage member Farm Bureaus to promote or provide activities which inform
 18 members of political issues, candidates, and public officials and to recruit viable
 19 candidates to run for office;
 20 5. Provide profiles of statewide candidates and issues;
 21 6. Take a more aggressive role in recruiting and assisting candidates that are friendly
 22 to agriculture because of the effects of term limits; and
 23 7. Encourage Farm Bureau members to take advantage of the credit against state
 24 income tax for contributions to candidates for state political office.

Judicial Elections **124**

1 All judges should be elected in a general election, and only be appointed to fill the
2 term if a current judge cannot fulfill his/her duties.

3 The role of the court is to interpret the law and Constitution(s), rather than making
4 new law via decisions.

Special Elections **125**

1 We oppose all special elections, except those necessary to fill office vacancies and for
2 Recall.

Student Voting **126**

1 Students desiring to vote should be required to vote in their home community. The
2 person designated as a student should not be permitted to register to vote in the college
3 location unless he/she is a permanent resident.

Help America Vote Act **127**

1 The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) provides regulations and finances to change the
2 way Ohio votes. Administration of funds should not adversely affect local government
3 finances. Local governments and their respective Boards of Elections should have the
4 authority to choose election equipment and program vendors.

Right of Recall **128**

1 We support the right of recall for state, county and township officials.

Initiative and Referendum **129**

1 We encourage a comprehensive review of initiative and referendum provisions in
2 Ohio law. Specifically, we believe that out of state petition gatherers, paid signature
3 gathering and the amount of needed signatures requires review and reform.

Redistricting **130**

1 We support a comprehensive review and reform of Ohio’s current redistricting and
2 apportionment process. We believe revisions to Ohio’s redistricting process should
3 incorporate:

- 4 1. Transparency, an open process and checks and balances;
- 5 2. Redrawing of legislative districts along county lines whenever possible;
- 6 3. Creating districts without reference to major metropolitan areas being used as the
7 center or hub upon which the district is created or based; and
4. Ensuring that land based, geographic references are used to connect all
communities and political subdivisions located within the legislative district.

Early Voting **131**

1 While we support early voting, it should be limited to a reasonable time.

ENERGY

Energy

141

1 Ohio Farm Bureau supports energy development efforts that involve the project
2 developer, utilities, regulatory agencies, government at the local, state and federal levels,
3 economic development authorities and community groups. These efforts should focus on
4 creation of projects that address environmental concerns, consider aesthetic needs and
5 provide economic benefits for landowners and the community.

6 Ohio Farm Bureau recognizes the rights of landowners to enter into effective
7 partnerships and agreements with developers to responsibly use land and resources to
8 develop energy transportation, generation and distribution projects.

9 Ohio Farm Bureau should provide leadership in the on-going development of a
10 comprehensive state energy policy that incorporates the use of coal, nuclear, natural gas,
11 petroleum and competitive renewable technologies. These renewable technologies
12 include, but are not limited to wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, hydroelectric, and fuel
13 cells.

14 We support:

- 15 1. Utilization of methane as a renewable fuel when it is captured from processes
16 using waste to energy technology, anaerobic digestion, biomass reaction and/or
17 collection from landfills and abandoned coal mines.
- 18 2. Developing our own natural resources to reduce the dependence on foreign fossil
19 fuels.
- 20 3. At least twenty-five percent of Ohio's energy needs being met through the use of
21 clean coal, advanced nuclear and renewable energy sources by 2025.
- 22 4. Legislation permitting tax credits, grants and other incentives to develop
23 renewable energy sources.
- 24 5. The development of public policies which encourage sustainable and renewable
25 energy production, especially for small and community scale, decentralized
26 situations.
- 27 6. Recognition of on-farm energy production as an agricultural product.
- 28 7. Farm and ranch owner access to liability insurance covering issues associated
29 with on-site energy development.
- 30 8. The recognition and utilization of coal as an economical and readily accessible
31 source for current electrical generation needs, as well as research and
32 development in clean coal technologies to provide for future energy
33 requirements.
- 34 9. The requirement to show a need for utility scale energy generation projects.
- 35 10. Net metering prices paid by utilities for on-site generation to reflect the cost of
36 generation, value of renewable energy and value of local energy production.
- 37 11. Incorporation of cost effective energy storage technology into renewable energy
38 generation to help make these systems base load generation assets.
- 39 12. Energy development companies and/or investment groups notifying landowners
40 when a lease on their land is sold or purchased.
- 41 13. Clearly defining specific production activities that keep an energy development
42 lease active and in force.

- 43 We encourage:
- 44 1. Upgrades to utility generation, transportation and distribution infrastructure that
- 45 could provide Ohio consumers direct access to lower cost natural gas supplies and
- 46 electric generation.
- 47 2. Landowners to explore creating negotiation groups advised by legal counsel,
- 48 thereby leveraging aggregate acreage, group interest and bargaining positions
- 49 when dealing with energy developers.
- 50 Ohio Farm Bureau should work with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
- 51 (FERC), the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO), incumbent utilities, service
- 52 providers, pipeline companies, and interested community leaders to enhance generation,
- 53 transportation and distribution systems.

Biofuels

142

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Research, development and utilization of agricultural products to create both solid
- 3 and liquid biofuels.
- 4 2. Creation and use of solid biofuels to help Ohio-based utilities, energy service
- 5 providers and industrial energy consumers combine the use of renewable
- 6 resources with investments in clean coal and other advanced energy technologies.
- 7 3. Construction and/or expansion of solid and liquid biofuel production facilities in
- 8 Ohio.
- 9 4. The use of ethanol in coal desulfurization.
- 10 5. Aggressive expansion of the Ohio Development Services Agency’s biofuel
- 11 utilization program to provide more resources helping fuel distributors and local
- 12 retail outlets install more infrastructure and pumps to distribute biofuels and other
- 13 renewable and/or alternative forms of energy to the public.
- 14 We encourage:
- 15 1. Research regarding cellulosic ethanol production utilizing woody biomass,
- 16 grasses, compost and other hydrocarbon-rich agricultural and food processing
- 17 byproducts and/or residues.
- 18 2. Expansion of liquid biofuels for use in the consumer market, as well as promotion
- 19 of these energy sources as they enhance efforts for a cleaner environment and
- 20 enhanced national security.
- 21 3. Utilization of Ohio’s expedited permitting process for advanced and renewable
- 22 liquid fuel plants to include solid biofuel processing facilities.
- 23 4. The use of biofuels, at the highest percentage blend economically feasible, in all
- 24 vehicles as distribution systems improve. We urge each Farm Bureau member to
- 25 actively promote the use and marketing of ethanol enhanced gasoline and soy-
- 26 biodiesel and continue support of an aggressive education campaign to promote
- 27 the benefits of ethanol-blended gasoline and the differences between ethanol and
- 28 methanol.
- 29 5. The State of Ohio to give preference to bio-based fuels in any alternative fuels
- 30 program.

- 31 6. Further research and development of uses of the by-products of biofuel
- 32 production.
- 33 7. State and local government agencies to use alternative fuels and to purchase
- 34 biofuel compliant vehicles.

Wind and Solar

143

1 We support Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) rules, regulations, stipulations, orders
2 and amendments that provide landowner friendly, reasonable and uniform statewide
3 procedures for siting, placement, construction and operation of utility-scale wind and
4 solar farms.

5 These should include:

- 6 1. A pre-application conference with local public officials that addresses the
- 7 environmental compatibility and public need for a proposed facility;
- 8 2. An initial public meeting to advise affected persons of the upcoming project and
- 9 to gather initial public input and concerns that are used by the applicant to aid in
- 10 preparation of an application;
- 11 3. Continued developer education/outreach activities ensuring dialogue between the
- 12 company and members of the community;
- 13 4. Establishment of an accessible local office by the developer, ensuring community
- 14 members have access to company representatives to discuss development issues
- 15 and possible concerns;
- 16 5. Creation of an application that evaluates economic, environmental, and aesthetic
- 17 impacts on the community as defined in the Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 4906,
- 18 and the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC), Chapter 4906. The application is to be
- 19 posted as a matter of public record on the OPSB website, with electronic and hard
- 20 copies available at all public libraries in the county, the office of the county
- 21 commissioners and through the township trustees in township within the project
- 22 area; and
- 23 6. Scheduling of adjudicatory and local public hearings, enabling citizens, interest
- 24 groups, and governmental entities to present testimony and included in the case as
- 25 evidence.

26 We encourage continued research and development in wind and solar generation
27 technology and expansion of Ohio Development Services Agency efforts to help Ohio-
28 based companies participate in supply chain programs to manufacture wind turbine and
29 solar parts.

30 We encourage increased cooperation between state and federal agencies in
31 minimizing and/or preventing delays in approval and construction of wind turbine
32 projects due to the concerns for migratory birds, bats or other wildlife.

33 We support education and outreach activities for local government leaders and
34 community planners as they work to create county, municipal and township zoning
35 ordinances supporting use of on-site wind turbine and solar technology for farm, business
36 and home use.

37 We support wind turbine setback requirements that ensure safety and are based on
38 scientific research.

Oil and Gas Exploration/Infrastructure 144

- 1 OFBF supports:
- 2 1. Strengthening the ODNR Division of Oil and Gas to enforce all rules governing
- 3 oil and gas exploration, infrastructure development and related activities.
- 4 2. Collaborative efforts between ODNR, state agencies, energy service providers,
- 5 local government leaders and rural residents to inspect, repair, remediate and
- 6 restore on farm resources and public infrastructure impacted by drilling,
- 7 transportation, storage, and production activities.
- 8 3. State and federal governments creating additional financial resources for local
- 9 communities to address economic, logistic, social and service issues as large oil
- 10 and gas exploration, refining and pipeline projects get underway in many
- 11 neighborhoods.
- 12 4. Strategies that balance conservation of farm and community resources with the
- 13 need to eliminate physical constraints and network interconnections required to
- 14 get new energy supplies to refineries and markets.
- 15 5. Preservation of current rules governing oil and gas exploration that protect soil
- 16 and water resources, as well as recognize implied covenants created through Ohio
- 17 court decisions that give landowners with lease agreements guaranteed provisions
- 18 to ensure repair, remediation and compensation on the impact of oil and gas
- 19 exploration, refining and pipeline construction on their property.
- 20 6. We urge new oil or gas pipelines follow existing pipeline easements whenever
- 21 possible.

On-Site Generation 145

1 We support incorporation of an option for on-site generation facilities using wind,
 2 solar and/or other renewable energy technologies into construction plans for school and
 3 local government facilities.

LABOR

Labor Legislation 151

1 We support state legislation to protect the rights of workers, farmers, and consumers
 2 during labor disputes.
 3 We support Ohio becoming a right to work state.

Migrant Housing 152

1 We support the clarification that migrant housing is exempt from local zoning
 2 regulations.
 3 We support working with the Ohio Department of Health to create an expedited
 4 process ensuring timely migrant labor camp inspections with licenses being issued for
 5 occupancy, and relief from regulations that create an unreasonable burden on the housing
 6 owner.
 7 We encourage the U.S. Department of Labor to approve the Ohio Department of
 8 Health as the housing inspection agency for the H-2A program in Ohio.

9 We support the reinstatement of funding for the Ohio Migrant Labor Camp
 10 Improvement Program, or the development of another cost sharing program to assist
 11 migrant labor camp construction and improvements.

Wage and Labor Standards **153**

1 Ohio labor standards should coincide with federal standards.

2 We support the use of proper survey methodology to obtain “prevailing wages” (as
 3 defined by the H2A program) for temporary worker programs as required by U.S. laws
 4 and regulations and encourage member participation.

5 We support civil rights and equal employment opportunity enforcement, however, we
 6 oppose any legislation that promotes the use of hiring and promotion quotas, allows
 7 punitive damage awards, or places the burden on the employer to prove his innocence.

8 We encourage agricultural representation within Ohio Department of Job and Family
 9 Services concerning local employment issues.

Prevailing Wage **154**

1 We support the elimination of the state and federal prevailing wage (Davis Bacon)
 2 laws.

Unemployment Insurance **155**

1 We support increasing the agricultural payroll threshold per calendar quarter to
 2 \$50,000 to reflect wage inflation that has occurred since the enactment of agricultural
 3 coverage and that it be indexed in the future to adjust for inflation. We also support
 4 increasing the agricultural threshold coverage for multiple employees from the current
 5 level of 10 or more persons during any portion of 20 or more weeks of the year to a level
 6 of 15 or more persons for any portion of 30 weeks of the year. We recommend a one-
 7 week waiting period before qualifying for benefits.

8 We will work to exempt wages of part-time farm laborers who are 18 years old and
 9 under, senior citizens, family members and full-time students from the requirements of
 10 the Ohio Unemployment Compensation Law.

11 We recommend that unemployment insurance not be paid to persons on strike, on
 12 voluntary leave, who are retired, cannot pass a drug test, or who refuse to work when
 13 work is available.

14 Unemployment insurance should not be extended to occasional domestic help or
 15 foreign workers in this country on foreign work permits.

16 We support retention of experience rating and preserving the state responsibility to
 17 determine eligibility and benefits.

18 We support the state law that would require minimum earnings of \$150 per qualifying
 19 week.

Workers’ Compensation **156**

1 We support continued improvement of the Workers’ Compensation program to
 2 eliminate inefficiencies, unfair claims, and excessive settlements.

3 We support a study by the legislature of privatized workers’ compensation systems of
 4 other states to determine if privatization would be good for Ohio.

5 We support programs or proposals that will lead to reasonable Workers’
 6 Compensation rates for farmers and other agricultural related businesses. Workers’
 7 Compensation programs have provided valuable protection for farmers and other
 8 employers by meeting the needs of injured employees. An insurance fund should be
 9 allowed to provide coverage for any intentional tort liability exposure.

10 We oppose their increase in minimum fees.

11 We recommend that employers who hire less than \$5,000 of labor per year file and
 12 report Workers’ Compensation premiums on an annual basis.

13 We support the Workers’ Compensation Group Rating Program. The group should
 14 be entitled to any savings on premium that is fairly earned by the group.

15 We urge better administrative auditing and legislative efforts to protect the Workers’
 16 Compensation fund.

17 The definition of employees for the purpose of Ohio’s Workers Compensation law
 18 should not be changed to exclude aliens or children.

19 We support the use of comprehensive medical care, including chiropractic treatments,
 20 in the Worker’s Compensation system, with the goal of expediting a return to work.

New Hire Reporting 157

1 We support the elimination of independent contractors in the definition of employees
 2 in Ohio’s new hire reporting requirements.

Workforce Development 158

1 We support enhanced research development and programming to meet the workforce
 2 development needs in Ohio agriculture and the advanced energy sector.

SECTION 2: QUALITY OF LIFE

SECTION 2: QUALITY OF LIFE

EDUCATION

Agricultural Awareness 201

- 1 We support:
- 2 Educating the public, including the media, through a variety of different mediums
- 3 about all types of agriculture and life on the farm. OFBF should leverage its resources by
- 4 affiliating itself with other like-minded organizations and groups.

Agricultural, Public and Continuing Education 202

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Adoption and promotion of nationally recognized best practices set forth for
- 3 agricultural education programs. We recommend that all agricultural education
- 4 programs be designed to address both educational performance standards and
- 5 recognized industry standards.
- 6 2. Funding for agricultural education instruction to occur beyond the regular school
- 7 day, week and year;
- 8 3. The development of agriscience based courses and the granting of science credit
- 9 for such courses;
- 10 4. Funding for agricultural education programs for all students, regardless of school
- 11 of attendance, race, national origin, sex, religion, handicap, or age;
- 12 5. Increased funding for Career Technology.
- 13 6. FFA as a personal and leadership development program;
- 14 7. State funding to all middle and high schools for agricultural education and FFA;
- 15 8. Local educational systems which allow students to take college preparatory
- 16 courses and agricultural education courses;
- 17 9. Ongoing alignment of secondary agricultural education programs with related
- 18 college programs that leads to articulated college credit and prepares students for
- 19 high technology agricultural and agribusiness related careers;
- 20 10. Requiring one semester of life skills education which includes an agricultural
- 21 education component prior to graduation; and
- 22 11. Programs that assure farmers have access to adult agricultural education that
- 23 provides financial management, record keeping, financial analysis instruction, and
- 24 retirement and estate planning.
- 25 12. School teachers participating in the “Food, Land and People” training program to
- 26 enhance “Ag in the Classroom”.
- 27 13. Expansion of supervised agricultural experience (SAE) programs and other
- 28 experiential programs which encourage students to participate in out-of-school
- 29 experiential learning activities that include internships, career research, job
- 30 shadowing, job placement and entrepreneurial job activities. We encourage
- 31 greater support of student out-of-school activities by industry and agriculture.
- 32 14. Expansion of adult training and retraining programs, in view of accelerating
- 33 technological and social changes. We urge that federal and state programs be
- 34 coordinated to make better use of existing facilities.

- 35 15. Retaining the agriculture education leadership team at the Ohio Department of
- 36 Education that includes three agricultural education consultant positions and one
- 37 administrative position to assist the programming needs of the Agriculture
- 38 Education Program.
- 39 16. Assisting the Ohio Department of Education in securing agriculture industry
- 40 representatives to help develop career technical education content standards that is
- 41 the foundation for agricultural education programs in preparing the future
- 42 workforce.
- 43 17. Efforts to secure funding for the construction of the Muskingum Discovery Center
- 44 located at Ohio FFA Camp Muskingum.
- 45 18. Efforts to promote, encourage, and educate regarding urban agriculture.

Higher Education

203

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. State funded universities exploring cost containment measures including
- 3 collaboration and consolidation because we are concerned about the effect of
- 4 inflation on our institutions of higher education.
- 5 2. Maintaining the funding needed to ensure a quality higher education program at
- 6 all of our state supported institutions of higher learning.
- 7 3. Offering agriculture related continuing education programs at the branch
- 8 campuses and community and technical colleges.
- 9 4. Informing youth of the diverse and attractive career opportunities available in
- 10 agriculture to increase enrollment in post-secondary agriculture education.
- 11 5. Encouraging shadowing and/or mentoring programs for students.
- 12 6. Programs for careers in agriculture that are not as costly and demanding as the
- 13 traditional four-year degree.
- 14 7. Colleges and universities who have agricultural degree programs.
- 15 We oppose:
- 16 Ohio’s state-funded universities making political or social statements through their
- 17 food purchasing practices.

Public Education

204

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Rural students having the same opportunities and benefits offered to their urban
- 3 and suburban counterparts. Education programs should give breadth, quality and
- 4 maximum opportunity in education to our citizens.
- 5 2. Distance learning programs made possible by new technologies.
- 6 3. A coordinated effort among agricultural groups to expand the Ag in the
- 7 Classroom program.
- 8 4. Creating the network necessary to establish farm to school food programs
- 9 throughout Ohio.
- 10 5. Family and Consumer Science courses including personal money management at
- 11 our elementary, middle and high schools.
- 12 6. The integration of agriculture and related industry in STEM (science, technology,
- 13 engineering and math) curriculum.
- 14 7. Studies to examine the impact of extending the school year.

- 15 8. A form of physical activity during each school day.
- 16 9. The agricultural STEM schools.
- 17 10. A Farm Bureau appointed seat on any agricultural STEM school governing board.
- 18 11. School districts to accept an open enrollment policy.
- 19 12. Organizations working together where possible in developing positive
- 20 agricultural/environmental literacy programs for youth and adults.
- 21 13. The development and use of materials and the necessary support to integrate basic
- 22 agricultural/environmental concepts into K-12 grade instruction.
- 23 14. Increasing school activities and programs to educate all students about the origins
- 24 and production practices of food, fiber, and fuel.
- 25 15. The enforcement of penalties for drugs, alcohols, and illegal weapons used or
- 26 found in schools.
- 27 16. Healthy food choices for all Ohio students utilizing Ohio farm products, to ensure
- 28 the well being of Ohio youth. Vending machines in all school facilities should
- 29 contain healthy options.
- 30 17. The repeal of the Common Core Standards Act for the State of Ohio.
- 31 18. Community, STEM and charter schools that use public funds be held to the same
- 32 accountability standards as public education.
- 33 19. All state board of education members being elected.
- 34 We oppose the establishment by law of a minimum school district population.

School Funding

205

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Evaluating alternative methods other than property taxes to fund schools.
- 3 2. Real property tax laws changing to benefit schools on a more equitable basis, such
- 4 as distributing increases and decreases in utility, industrial, and commercial tax
- 5 revenues on a per pupil basis across the state.
- 6 3. State funding monies be more equitably divided among all local school districts
- 7 on a per student basis to promote equal education opportunities for all students.
- 8 4. The State of Ohio exploring incentives for schools to develop long term financial
- 9 plans and establish “rainy day” funds.
- 10 5. School districts having the option to propose a credit against property tax for any
- 11 income tax and sales tax approved by the voters.
- 12 6. A review of the practical benefits of HB 920 for those districts at the 20-mill
- 13 floor.
- 14 7. Continued funding for county education service centers from the state education
- 15 budget.
- 16 8. The Ohio School Facilities Commission re-evaluating their school building
- 17 funding policies in relation to sound land use planning. The department’s policies
- 18 encourage abandoning existing buildings and financing only new construction
- 19 which is often outside villages and in rural areas.
- 20 9. Ohio prioritizing future education programs so that the majority of the funds go to
- 21 in-classroom needs.
- 22 10. Schools in Ohio continuing to retain their local identities, but consolidating
- 23 administrative costs across district lines, which may include the reduction of

24 school districts. Further efficiencies can be made by incentivizing the use of non-
 25 mandatory cost controls, such as health care pooling.

26 We oppose:

- 27 1. Any increase in the 10 mill limitation on inside millage.
- 28 2. Any constitutional amendment regarding school funding that is deemed fiscally
 29 irresponsible, fails to help rural schools, and lessens the taxpayers' voice as
 30 expressed by the state legislature.
- 31 3. Legislation funding public education through cuts in the funding of the Ohio
 32 Agricultural Research and Development Center.

THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

The Ohio State University

221

1 We support:

- 2 1. Land Grant Mission
 - 3 a. The Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental
 4 Sciences and the Ohio Farm Bureau using every economic and political means
 5 to assure that The Ohio State University accomplishes its stated mission,
 6 which is to promote a sound and prosperous agriculture and rural life as
 7 indispensable to national prosperity and security. (The Morrill Act of 1862
 8 established the Land Grant college mission.)
 - 9 2. Board, Faculty & Staff
 - 10 a. The Governor maintaining agricultural representatives on the Ohio State
 11 University Board of Trustees.
 - 12 b. Changes to the promotion and tenure system that currently does not credit
 13 researchers for their practical advances on behalf of production agriculture.
 - 14 c. Emphasizing the importance of agriculture in teaching and research at The
 15 Ohio State University College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental
 16 Sciences, Agricultural Technical Institute, Ohio Agricultural Research and
 17 Development Center, and Ohio State University Extension.
 - 18 d. The timely replacement of extension experts lost through retirement or
 19 attrition to preserve the level of expertise developed over many years.
 - 20 3. Funding
 - 21 a. Maintaining adequate funding for the College of Food, Agricultural and
 22 Environmental Sciences, the College of Education and Human Ecology, Ohio
 23 Agricultural Research and Development Center, Agricultural Technical
 24 Institute, Ohio State University Extension, Regional campuses and the
 25 College of Veterinary Medicine.
 - 26 b. Making the best use of money received by avoiding duplication of research
 27 projects and promoting coordination and collaboration between Ohio research
 28 facilities.
 - 29 c. Development of an alternate funding model for the Agricultural Technical
 30 Institute.
 - 31 d. Using farmer check-off money to help finance research programs, and
 32 encourage the reinvestment of financial gains, including intellectual property
 33 rights, to the entity that funded the research.

- 34 e. Continued funding of adult agriculture education programs throughout Ohio.
 35 f. Creating innovative ways for farmers to direct funding to specific faculty at
 36 agricultural land grant institutions for specific research projects.
 37 g. The Ohio Agricultural Research Fund for the purpose of matching farmer
 38 dollars to fund applied agricultural research by the agriculture industry.
- 39 4. Teaching & Research
 40 a. All facets of farm management education emphasized in adult education
 41 programs, including finance, money management, marketing, production and
 42 risk management.
 43 b. Incubation of training programs for alternative and developing farm
 44 businesses.
 45 c. State political and educational leaders developing a positive strategy for
 46 biotechnology research, development, and consumer education, thereby
 47 broadening the markets for Ohio farmers.
 48 d. Research and promotion of alternate uses of agricultural products and research
 49 on cost effective nutrient handling and management.
- 50 5. Facilities
 51 a. Acting on a progressive facility plan for OSU, CFAES, ATI, OARDC and the
 52 research stations.
 53 b. OSU-CFAES developing and maintaining world class facilities for its
 54 students, faculty and the surrounding community.
 55 c. Maintaining a strong agricultural presence on the Columbus campus and
 56 specifically at the Waterman facility. Such facilities must be modern,
 57 attractive, multi-functional, flexible and provide the best educational
 58 experience to students, research and teaching opportunities to faculty and
 59 outreach opportunities for the community.
- 60 6. Growing the agricultural experience
 61 a. OSU CFAES allowing for industry, community and consumer outreach and
 62 partnering both within and outside of OSU, which is critical for maintaining
 63 agriculture's social license into the future.
- 64 7. Indoctrinating agriculture into OSU Discovery Themes
 65 a. Agriculture playing a key role in each of OSU's discovery themes (health &
 66 wellness, food production & security, environmental stewardship).
- 67 8. Delivering on the needs of agriculture
 68 a. Food and agriculture research being applicable and readily disseminated in a
 69 useable format to farmers and allied industry.
 70 b. Aiding farmers and the broad agriculture industry in regulatory compliance.
 71 c. Utilizing current and/or developing new opportunities to provide input to
 72 agricultural universities regarding industry needs.
- 73 9. Building consumer and community outreach
 74 a. OSU-CFAES capitalizing on the unique urban-rural interface that Ohio as a
 75 whole, compared to other Midwest land grants, and Columbus campus
 76 specifically enjoys to build consumer and community outreach.

- 77 10. Promoting collaboration
- 78 a. OSU CFAES partnering with other colleges within the university, (hospitality,
- 79 culinary, etc.) as well as students at other colleges/universities to provide them
- 80 with a unique perspective and complete picture of the food industry.
- 81 b. Coordination and increased interaction between CFAES campuses and
- 82 facilities, ATI, OARDC and research facilities.
- 83 c. Collaboration between other land-grant universities, particularly in the
- 84 Midwest.
- 85 d. Developing opportunities for students to experience and utilize multiple
- 86 campuses and facilities during their tenure at OSU.
- 87 11. Increasing public private partnership
- 88 a. Creating a facility(ies) at OSU CFAES that is self-supporting or generates
- 89 revenue through a public private partnership.
- 90 b. Farmers and allied industry partnering with OSU CFAES to provide
- 91 experiential training through internships.
- 92 c. New fundraising/funding models in order for the agriculture industry to better
- 93 support the CFAES and university.
- 94 12. Creating a Center of Excellence
- 95 a. OSU creating a Center of Excellence in agriculture or a training site that will
- 96 attract the best students and faculty from around the world.
- 97 13. Constructing a world class educational/student experience
- 98 a. Ohio's land-grant educational system being affordable and accessible for Ohio
- 99 students.
- 100 b. Special efforts by OSU CFAES to recruit and retain Ohio agriculture students.
- 101 c. Preparing students that are workforce ready with skill sets including business,
- 102 management, production, critical thinking, hands-on experience, leadership,
- 103 and team building.
- 104 d. Increased faculty and agriculture industry interaction and opportunities for
- 105 faculty development.

Ohio State University Extension

222

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The concept of OSU Extension and its purpose of delivering unbiased research
- 3 and science-based information to farmers and communities and providing youth
- 4 development opportunities. However, Extension must undergo a transformation
- 5 to ensure its long-term sustainability and adherence to this purpose. As part of
- 6 this transformation, OSU Extension should:
- 7 a. Define its purpose and increase its emphasis on agriculture and natural
- 8 resources, nutrition and 4-H Youth Development.
- 9 b. Restructure to adopt a workable regional / multi-county concept, while
- 10 retaining a programming presence in each county.
- 11 c. Develop a new funding model that is sustainable, equitable, and addresses
- 12 challenges to local funding.
- 13 d. Increase collaboration with other agricultural and/or youth organizations with
- 14 similar missions, which may include collaboration on office space, staffing,
- 15 administrative functions, and/or programming,

- 16 e. Improve communication with constituents regarding this transformation.
- 17 f. Continue with efforts to promote, encourage, and educate regarding urban
- 18 agriculture.
- 19 2. Youth in every county having the opportunity to participate in 4-H. In the event
- 20 that a county or region no longer has a functioning 4-H program, OSU Extension
- 21 should provide a mechanism that allows those youth to participate in 4-H
- 22 programs in their respective counties.
- 23 a. In the event that a county 4-H program is terminated mid-year due to lack of
- 24 funding, after 4-H members have paid their 4-H dues and started their
- 25 projects, OSU Extension nonetheless has an obligation to allow those
- 26 members to remain 4-H members for the remainder of the calendar year and
- 27 finish their projects, including exhibiting such projects at county and state
- 28 fairs as 4-H members. 4-H members already participating in a neighboring
- 29 county’s 4-H program should be allowed to continue participating in that
- 30 program even if their home county loses its 4-H program.
- 31 b. In the event that every youth in Ohio does not have the opportunity to
- 32 participate in 4-H, we support an amendment to the Junior Fair Livestock
- 33 Division Competition Standards to expand eligibility requirements for
- 34 exhibition of livestock in the Ohio State Junior Fair to members of other
- 35 recognized youth organizations (such as Ohio Farm Bureau Youth) or the
- 36 youth program of a recognized breeding association (such as the BEST
- 37 program through the Ohio Cattlemen’s Association), so long as the
- 38 organization provides adequate supervision and training for both participating
- 39 youth and adult volunteers, and requires participating youth to complete
- 40 educational workshops, maintain records, attend Livestock Quality Assurance
- 41 training, etc., similar to existing 4-H and FFA programs.
- 42 3. Encouraging OSU Extension to support county extension educator’s efforts to
- 43 provide comprehensive programming in all four areas when funding is available.
- 44 4. OSU Extension modifying the new rules for county extension educators to allow
- 45 educators to provide programming in areas outside their respective appointments.
- 46 5. OSU Extension’s decision to allow counties to choose which specialty educator
- 47 they want to employ.
- 48 6. A viable Extension system that:
- 49 a. Plays a larger role in the community than just the county office.
- 50 b. Improves use of technology as a communication tool between farmers and
- 51 OSU Extension.
- 52 c. Explores the redesign of extension around discovery themes versus counties.
- 53 d. Focuses the flow of information to the community.

HEALTH

Health Care

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The development and implementation of a universal standardized processing
- 3 system for insurance claims and medical administration;

- 4 2. Insurance reform including elimination of mandates; guaranteed renewability of
- 5 policies; and, creation of basic insurance plans and risk pools;
- 6 3. Reform of tax policy to give taxpayers equal incentives for purchasing health
- 7 insurance or for direct payment of health care needs;
- 8 4. The elimination of cost shifting from Medicare, Medicaid and other programs to
- 9 insured patients; and
- 10 5. The continued use of waivers in individual health care plans.

11 We oppose:

- 12 1. Mandated employer provided health insurance and
- 13 2. Reductions in Medicaid reimbursement that will create financial hardship to rural
- 14 hospitals and pharmacies.
- 15 3. The ability for Medicaid to recover medical expenses from the portion of the
- 16 estate that generates business income for the surviving family.

Health Cost Containment

232

1 We support:

- 2 1. Association health plans.
- 3 2. Hospitals that are closed converting to extended care facilities when such
- 4 facilities are needed.
- 5 3. The medical establishment developing medical practice parameters that could be
- 6 used to place limits on liability and malpractice lawsuits if followed.
- 7 4. All health insurance providers, including HMOs and PPOs to clearly
- 8 communicate to their policyholders the different care options included in the
- 9 applicable policies and assist policyholders whenever unusual circumstances are
- 10 encountered.
- 11 5. Restructuring of the Medicaid program so that it (1) covers only services
- 12 mandated by federal law, (2) institutes payment caps for the necessary services
- 13 and (3) provides incentives to program participants to contain costs through co-
- 14 pays, tax incentives and health savings accounts (HSA's).
- 15 6. A private health care system that provides catastrophic insurance.
- 16 7. State government reviewing Medicaid for cost containment strategies.
- 17 8. Active prosecution of Medicare and Medicaid fraud with penalties up to lifetime
- 18 program disqualification.

19 We oppose:

- 20 1. Two-tiered medical billing system that differentiates between those who have
- 21 health insurance and those who do not.
- 22 2. Additional state mandates. Ohio law should provide for an option for private
- 23 insurers to offer health insurance policies without state mandated coverage.

Health Service

233

1 We support:

- 2 1. Obtaining more health care centers and medical personnel in rural Ohio by
- 3 appropriate agencies.
- 4 2. Utilization of certified physician's assistants and licensed nurse practitioners
- 5 under the guidance of a medical control center as health care providers in rural
- 6 counties needing additional doctors.

- 7 3. Community based health care services as cost effective alternatives to
- 8 institutionalized care.
- 9 4. Development of more assisted living services for the citizens of rural areas.
- 10 5. Proper funding and community support for programs that will help reduce and
- 11 eliminate Ohio's opiate epidemic including programs that focus on housing,
- 12 employment, treatment, medication and methods to reduce relapse.

SAFETY

Safety

241

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Continuing an OFBF safety program to keep our members safety conscious.
- 3 2. The establishment of an educational program that targets security and storage
- 4 issues associated with farm fertilizers and chemicals.
- 5 3. Convenient certification and re-certification training that includes agricultural
- 6 awareness that is made available for emergency medical technicians, fire fighters,
- 7 humane agents, first responders, emergency managers, military, and other public
- 8 safety volunteers. We support more realistic training requirements for anyone
- 9 serving in the foregoing roles in a volunteer capacity.
- 10 4. The voluntary posting of easily recognized emblems where chemicals are stored
- 11 to ensure the safety of our firefighters, since many chemicals, when burned, may
- 12 emit toxic fumes.
- 13 5. Utilities placing warning sheaths on guy wires in crop fields.
- 14 6. Installing ear protection symbols on any equipment that will emit sounds greater
- 15 than 85 decibels, which is the level of sound that is considered dangerous.
- 16 7. Displaying reflective house numbering signs in an effort to reduce the response
- 17 time for emergency vehicles.
- 18 8. All farmers using ROPS (Roll Over Protection Structures) and seat belts when
- 19 operating farm tractors.
- 20 9. Farm and farm equipment safety courses.
- 21 10. Local emergency personnel training in farm machinery access, grain bin rescue
- 22 and entrapment extraction.
- 23 11. Education and use of the NOAA (National Oceanographic Atmospheric
- 24 Administration) radio network by working with local and state public safety
- 25 officials.
- 26 12. Farmers to have a farm safety plan.

Motor Vehicle/Road Safety

242

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The Ohio Department of Transportation placing flashing stop signs at dangerous
- 3 rural intersections of state routes;
- 4 2. The placement of reflective tape on all stop sign posts;
- 5 3. Placement of stop signs at intersections should have an indication whether it is a
- 6 two-way, four-way, or some other intersection configuration;

- 7 4. Stop ahead signs, rumble strips or blinkers at dangerous intersections. We
8 encourage the Ohio Department of Transportation to consider local input and give
9 more emphasis to installation of traffic lights at dangerous rural intersections;
- 10 5. Red and white stripes on all truck beds, semi-trucks and trailers, and amber tape
11 on farm equipment so they are more visible in hazy and foggy conditions;
- 12 6. Keeping highway white lines painted and installing more surface reflectors at
13 intersections and on hills and curves;
- 14 7. The development and use of educational materials and testing related to signage,
15 lighting, signaling, passing agricultural equipment, and safe driving practices;
- 16 8. That all newly manufactured cars be equipped with daytime front and rear
17 running lamps to ensure driver safety;
- 18 9. Legislation requiring the proper use of additional accessory highway lights that
19 are typically mounted below the standard headlights. These unfocused high
20 intensity lights should be used to provide additional wide range illumination only
21 when the high beams are in use;
- 22 10. More liberal use of reduced speed limits on rural roads where road topography
23 warrants such speed limit reduction;
- 24 11. The Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles clearly display the county names on all Ohio
25 license plates;
- 26 12. The use of yellow “Prepare to Stop When Flashing” signs to warn of upcoming
27 traffic lights on high-speed highways or dangerous intersections;
- 28 13. The standards required to install traffic safety improvements being based on
29 accident/incident rates;
- 30 14. State and local road authorities giving consideration to the movement of farm
31 equipment when placing safety guardrails and signage along roadways;
- 32 15. Ohio Department of Motor Vehicles to allow options for renewing vehicle
33 registration for commercial vehicles and farm trucks to be conducted via U.S.
34 Mail or the internet;
- 35 16. The mowing of roadways prior to June 1 and periodically through the summer to
36 control noxious weeds and improve safety;
- 37 17. We support mowing and other maintenance to sustain a clear line of vision on the
38 highway right-of-way for a distance of 500 feet from any intersection;
- 39 18. Liability protection of landowners when maintaining road rights of way on their
40 property; and
- 41 19. School zone signs clearly designating which times restricted hours are in effect.
- 42 20. The proper use of safety belts and child restraint seats;
- 43 21. The use of hands-free communication devices when operating a motor vehicle;
- 44 22. ODOT to using the most economical and ecologically safe weed control along
45 highways;
- 46 23. Joggers, pedestrians, and cyclists wearing some kind of reflective cloth after night
47 or evening while on all roads and streets;
- 48 24. The use of helmets by riders of motorcycles, bicycles, mopeds, snowmobiles, and
49 all-terrain vehicles; and
- 50 25. Flashing yellow lights on frequently stopping vehicles for use during predawn and
51 early evening hours.

Railroads and Crossing Safety**243**

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Adequate lighting at all railroad crossings, warning mechanisms or stop signs
 - 3 installed, and all brush, weeds, and removing railroad cars parked on sidings that
 - 4 obstruct the view at railroad crossings. All railroad cars should have reflective
 - 5 Department of Transportation tape placed on both sides of the cars.
 - 6 2. Regular inspection of railroad crossings for potholes and other problems. Any
 - 7 problems should be repaired in a timely manner.
 - 8 3. Amending the Ohio Revised Code to allow state, county, township and municipal
 - 9 highway departments to erect stop signs at unlighted and non-gated railroad
 - 10 crossings.
 - 11 4. Requiring railroads to pay 50 percent of safety improvements, instead of the
 - 12 current 10 percent.
 - 13 5. Improvement of railroad crossing approach ramps and road width allowances to
 - 14 allow for the safe crossing of large farm equipment and low clearance highway
 - 15 vehicles.
 - 16 6. Enforcing the maintenance of line fences on existing railroads and along
 - 17 abandoned right-of-ways, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 4959.02 (A),
 - 18 even when the railroad property is sold or transferred.

Slow Moving Vehicles**244**

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The use of safety lights and official SMV emblems as required in the Ohio
 - 3 Revised Code and approved by American Society of Agricultural Engineers
 - 4 (ASAE) on farm machinery, including all horse drawn vehicles used on public
 - 5 roadways.
 - 6 2. Proper use of the Speed Indicator Symbol (SIS) for farm equipment designed to
 - 7 travel faster than 25 miles per hour.
 - 8 3. Replacing all old-style farm machinery caution signs with the newer signs that
 - 9 include the SMV sign.
- 10 We oppose:
- 11 1. SMV signs being used for non-SMV purposes, such as driveway markers.

TRANSPORTATION**Highways****261**

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The option of three-shift labor to expedite any contracted highway construction
 - 3 and repair project.
 - 4 2. The use of alternative ice control methods such as corn by-products, sand or
 - 5 limestone chips, and reduce the use of salt and calcium chloride on federal, state,
 - 6 county and township highway systems in Ohio when feasible, to prevent
 - 7 contamination and long term effects on potable water used for drinking, livestock,
 - 8 and irrigation.
 - 9 3. The state assuming responsibility for all bridges on the state highway system,
 - 10 regardless of location. ODOT should make the repair and replacement of bridges,

- 11 including the resizing of bridges for drainage, a priority. We support the use of
12 properly treated wood, especially poplar, in repairing or rebuilding of bridges 40
13 feet or less in length.
- 14 4. Revising the qualification standards specified in the Association of State Highway
15 and Transportation manual so Ohio counties can benefit from grants and matching
16 funds for road construction. Current standards are inappropriate for conditions in
17 Ohio and make the construction cost prohibitive.
 - 18 5. Existing roads and right of ways being used wherever possible for the
19 construction of any proposed highways.
 - 20 6. The positioning of mailboxes and newspaper boxes according to the Federal
21 Postal Regulations and encourage placing them on the same side of the road. We
22 support enforcement, by either the county engineer or county zoning inspector, of
23 the minimum set back requirement where applicable for mail and paper boxes
24 along state, county, and township roads. If there is not a set-back distance, then
25 one should be established. We propose a standard three feet from the edge of the
26 road set-back for mailboxes to facilitate the movement of large equipment.
 - 27 7. The widening of state, county, and township road berms, and the widening of
28 overpasses during new construction or reconstruction. At minimum, berms
29 should be returned to the width prior to construction. Access roads should remain
30 open and be maintained until the project is complete.
 - 31 8. Maintaining fog lines on the edges of all paved roads.
 - 32 9. A review of the current state funding formula for maintenance and repair of
33 bridges on county roads. The state is responsible for prioritizing funding for
34 projects (rather than the county) and the current formula penalizes counties that
35 have a good bridge maintenance program.
 - 36 10. A revision of the applicable funding formula to increase funds for counties and
37 townships to maintain their roads.
 - 38 11. Steps to get more semi trucks to use the turnpike including, for example, a review
39 of existing load limits and tolls.
 - 40 12. The Ohio Department of Transportation revising their standards for headwater
41 back up so that they do not cause flooding of farmland due to wrongly sized
42 culverts and drainage structures under roadbeds.
 - 43 13. The PUCO to regularly inspecting railroad crossings for deterioration and to have
44 crossings maintained in a timely manner.
 - 45 14. Allowing a 25 percent weight variance for farm implements being towed by a
46 licensed motorized vehicle.
 - 47 15. Allowing a 25 percent seasonal weight variance for farm equipment.
 - 48 16. Farm machinery and implements being exempt from Ohio's weight laws, except
49 for restrictions on bridges and frost law.
 - 50 17. The State of Ohio and all contiguous states to enter into a compact to recognize
51 each state's commercial driver's license exemption.
 - 52 18. The State of Ohio maintaining fences along its highways, or, in the alternative,
53 allow the landowners to remove a fence in disrepair.
 - 54 19. Identification signs being placed on all interstate overpasses designating the
55 crossroads.

- 56 20. Revisions of the highway axle limits taking into consideration the tire size and air
- 57 pressure, not just axle weight.
- 58 21. The ability of county engineers to establish road use maintenance agreements
- 59 (RUMA) with entities developing and operating projects where heavy and
- 60 repetitive loads impact road infrastructure.
- 61 22. Giving counties the authority to designate reasonable primary travel routes for
- 62 licensed, heavy vehicles traveling to and from permitted livestock facilities.
- 63 23. Mandatory response from ODOT Permit Department within 30 days to confirm or
- 64 deny a permit application.
- 65 24. County Farm Bureaus’ involvement in the planning, location and development of
- 66 the highway construction, development or expansion projects in their counties and
- 67 regions.
- 68 25. Ohio Farm Bureau working with Ohio Department of Transportation to promote
- 69 projects deemed worthy by local Farm Bureaus.
- 70 26. Requirements for the Ohio Department of Transportation to develop plans for the
- 71 efficient transportation of agricultural commodities, supplies and equipment
- 72 during periods of road construction and repair.
- 73 27. The following principles and considerations be addressed as a part of any
- 74 capitalization plan for the Ohio Turnpike:
- 75 a. Maintenance of the turnpike infrastructure and facilities, including overpass
- 76 approaches associated with the turnpike;
- 77 b. Increased stress and traffic on local roads, and resultant safety concerns;
- 78 c. Accountability to citizens and local businesses;
- 79 d. Economic viability of surrounding communities;
- 80 e. Increase in tolls without a corresponding increase in maintenance or
- 81 infrastructure;
- 82 f. Property tax implications; and
- 83 g. Revenue should be distributed over the length of the agreements.
- 84 28. ODOT moving quickly to implement planned projects to provide economic
- 85 development opportunities to underserved areas, for example, southeastern Ohio
- 86 where highway access is limited.
- 87 We oppose:
- 88 1. The term “highway and road purposes” as used in Ohio Department of
- 89 Transportation easements being altered to include use for commercial advertising
- 90 or cellular phone towers.
- 91 2. The privatization of the Ohio Turnpike.

All-Terrain Vehicles

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Recognition by law enforcement officials that all-terrain vehicles may be used as
- 3 agricultural equipment, conducting normal farming activities.
- 4 2. ATVs be allowed access to roads or road right-of-way when used in farm
- 5 operations.
- 6 3. Proof of a safety training course be required of an ATV operator.

- 7 4. Legislation that requires one to obtain written permission from the landowner and
 8 show proof of insurance before being allowed to operate ATVs and snowmobiles
 9 on other than personally owned or leased property.

License Requirement for Drivers of Buses Transporting Farm Workers 263

1 We support:

- 2 1. An exemption from the Commercial Drivers License requirement for drivers of
 3 buses used to transport farm workers under the following conditions:
 4 a. The bus is used to transport farm workers employed by that farm;
 5 b. The bus shall not be driven on limited access highways; and
 6 c. The bus shall be limited to a short travel distance per day.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Law Enforcement 271

1 We support:

- 2 1. Local, state and federal governments cooperate to find funding for regional jails
 3 without placing the burden on the local level Examples include conversion of
 4 closed military bases to detention centers or abandoned sites in urban areas for
 5 construction of prisons.
 6 2. Efforts to reform current guidelines for state jail construction and subsequent
 7 staffing so they are more reasonable and simply provide for the basic daily needs
 8 of criminals since current guidelines are excessive in providing for those
 9 incarcerated and place extreme pressure on county finances.
 10 3. Alternative sentencing practices because of the current overcrowding and long
 11 waiting lists to serve a sentence.
 12 4. The concept of guilty but mentally insane instead of innocent by reason of
 13 insanity.
 14 5. The establishment of multi-county juvenile detention centers.
 15 6. Legislation allowing revenue from the sale of unclaimed stolen merchandise to
 16 help fund crime stopper programs.
 17 7. The state department of youth services to fully fund the care and treatment of all
 18 youth felons served in their communities by local agencies.
 19 8. Greater consequences and support stiffer penalties for rural crimes including theft
 20 of property and the vandalism and/or destruction of crops or livestock.
 21 9. Increasing the penalty of theft of any precursor used to manufacture any illegal
 22 addictive substance from a misdemeanor to a felony, particularly when a minor is
 23 used to procure the substance. We also favor increasing funding for undercover
 24 investigations and drug task force agencies.
 25 10. The utilization and timely updating of state and national law enforcement
 26 databases to provide more comprehensive information on criminals and criminal
 27 activity.
 28 11. The rights of individuals to keep, bear, and carry arms.
 29 12. The law enforcement policy of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and local
 30 enforcement agency for anyone found guilty of intentionally damaging or
 31 destroying a public or private U.S. mailbox.

- 32 13. Enforcing the litter laws to stop the littering of items that can be harmful to farm
 33 animals and machinery.
 34 14. Neighborhood watch programs.
 35 15. Statewide implementation of the MARCS radio system for law enforcement,
 36 EMS, and Fire Departments.
 37 16. Federal, state and local cooperation to investigate and prosecute federal benefits
 38 fraud such as SNAP, Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) and Medicare/Medicaid.
 39 17. Unused public buildings to be considered for use as minimum security
 40 confinement facilities for non-violent offenders and urge changes in federal
 41 and/or state laws that would permit this action.
 42 18. Farmers to report all fertilizer and chemical thefts and suspicious activities.
 43 19. Whenever possible, convicted offenders should be required to compensate victims
 44 for loss, damage or injury caused by their crime.
 45 20. The state, rather than local governments, to cover the cost of legal procedures for
 46 those individuals arrested on drug charges or trafficking on the interstate
 47 highways.
 48 21. Parental financial responsibility for full payment of vandalism by minors and for
 49 retention of minors in detention centers who are convicted of a crime.
 50 22. Law enforcement officials be required to facilitate the exchange of information
 51 among those involved in an accident (i.e., name, address, insurance carrier, etc.).
 52 23. Law enforcement officials be required to relay information concerning property
 53 damage to the respective owner.
 54 24. Law enforcement officials receive training on agricultural laws such as weight
 55 limits, etc., that will meet the requirements of Continuing Education Units for the
 56 officers.
 57 We oppose:
 58 1. Repeat offenders being released without serving an appropriate sentence.
 59 2. Reduced recognizance bonds for repeat offenders.
 60 3. Cultivation, sale and use of illegal marijuana in Ohio.

UTILITIES

Electric Service

281

- 1 We support:
 2 1. Rate schedules be established to promote energy conservation, daily off-peak
 3 usage and off-peak seasonal usage in agriculture without the penalty of
 4 unreasonably high demand charges and minimum monthly bills. Farm rates
 5 should match or never exceed the residential rate.
 6 2. The use of Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) technology and its greater
 7 use throughout Ohio for utility customers.
 8 3. The State of Ohio in cooperation with electric utilities to establish an educational
 9 program to shift energy use to non-peak times and to mitigate energy charge
 10 increases that may result from rate restructuring.
 11 4. Legislation to require municipal power companies to pay the same taxes as other
 12 electric companies (gross receipt tax and property tax).

- 13 5. Power companies working with customers to locate and resolve problems with
14 stray voltage.
- 15 6. The following safeguards to guide the transition to deregulation.
- 16 a. Quality service should continue to be provided to all customers;
- 17 b. Cost shifting should not occur between classes of customers; and
- 18 c. There should be retention of exclusive electric distribution service areas.
- 19 7. A change in the law to sell energy from alternative sources to the electric grid
20 including rural electric cooperatives at a ratio equal to whatever the customer pays
21 per kilowatt.
- 22 8. Energy policies and regulations that maintain stabilized electric rates and we
23 encourage Ohio's leaders to move together to solved these issues. We encourage
24 the PUCO to use the tools it already has to ensure Ohio's electric consumers have
25 access to reliable service and reasonable prices. We are concerned about the
26 possible impact that abrupt electric rate increases would have on Ohio's farm
27 households, business, and local economies.
- 28 We oppose:
- 29 1. Electric companies asking any rate increase to compensate for the loss of income
30 (referred to as delta revenue) from reduced rates given industries, schools, and
31 municipalities.
- 32 2. PUCO regulation of Rural Electric Co-ops.

Natural Gas

282

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Access to self-help gas for farmers, processors and handlers.
- 3 2. Efforts that increase competition in the gas transportation industry.
- 4 3. Expansion of compressed natural gas (CNG) fueling infrastructure to include
5 other types of fuel gas resources.
- 6 4. Farm Bureau's monitoring of the gas transportation industry's transition into non-
7 regulated competition to ensure that rural landowners are protected.
- 8 5. Participation in residential and small commercial gas transportation programs.

Public Utilities

283

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The payment, by stockholders rather than consumers, of those costs of service that
3 can be identified as the result of poor management decisions.
- 4 2. Utility companies maintaining their utility cables or lines, including adequate
5 heights or depths. Maintenance should include clearing of impediments in right-
6 of-ways to maintain integrity and visibility of utility services.
- 7 3. As cable companies expand services, they be under the regulatory review of the
8 PUCO.

Telephone Service

284

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The cooperation of every telephone company in providing Extended Area Service
3 (EAS) to contiguous exchanges and that EAS be made available to the county seat
4 where subscribers express interest.

- 5 2. Minimum service requirements for the telephone industry include publishing in
6 each directory all emergency and county governmental office numbers.
- 7 3. The application, by rural communities, for extended local calling or similar type
8 service where it is to the advantage of subscribers.
- 9 4. Rural subscribers' ability to receive the same quality of service (including access
10 to Internet, long distance carriers, and any other services).
- 11 5. The ability of all subscribers to call their county seat, local school, closest
12 hospital, and attending fire protection toll free.
- 13 6. The following safeguards and protections and believe they should remain in place
14 while considering deregulation of the telephone industry:
- 15 a. Ensuring that all customers have access to reliable basic local telephone
16 service at fair and reasonable prices
- 17 b. Required universal service or payment into a subsidy fund;
- 18 c. New entrants create local calling areas of equal to or greater size than those
19 currently in place;
- 20 d. New entrants should respect current EAS agreements;
- 21 e. The integrity of 911 services should be maintained and upgraded by granting
22 county commissioners discretionary authority to add a monthly charge to
23 telephone bills; and
- 24 f. Directory assistance and written directories should be in a standardized
25 format.
- 26 7. Increased wireless service in rural areas.
- 27 8. Enhanced 911 services for cell phones, voice over internet protocol (VOIP), cable
28 and emerging technologies, and the additional monthly charge to pay for the new
29 technology.
- 30 9. Methods of controlling telemarketing that include:
- 31 a. Individuals listed on the state do not call list should have the option of
32 excluding calls from political organizations and/or candidates and
- 33 b. Prohibiting a telemarketer from blocking his/her name and number from caller
34 ID.
- 35 We oppose:
- 36 1. The collection of zone charges by local telephone companies.

Water Supply

285

- 1 We oppose:
- 2 1. Mandates for landowners to use a particular water supply.

Rural Broadband

286

- 1 We support
- 2 1. Increased access to high speed Internet connections in rural areas, including
3 wireless, that is reliable and price competitive.
- 4 2. Rural broadband initiatives in Ohio and recognize the increased economic
5 development opportunities that come to rural areas with increased access.
- 6 3. Local government, education and business aggregation to increase demand for
7 rural areas.

Utility Deregulation**287**

1 We support:

- 2 1. Farm Bureau’s monitoring of utility deregulation, customer choice and demand
3 side management/energy efficiency (DSM/EE) programs expansion in Ohio.
- 4 2. Creation and development of PUCO-approved and monitored programs with
5 investor-owned utilities aimed at helping all ratepayers achieve energy savings.
- 6 3. Cooperative and municipal utilities working with their leadership, members and
7 residents to pursue the same objectives.
- 8 4. The following initiatives and helping energy consumers use these programs to
9 control energy costs:
- 10 a. Energy Audits: To help consumers identify and maximize savings
11 opportunities, utilities should offer energy audit and consultation services that
12 could be employed prior to any technology purchases, facility retrofits and/or
13 service contracts.
- 14 b. Utility Sponsored DSM/EE Options: Programs should be available for all
15 customer classes, and should include, but are not limited to appliance
16 purchasing/recycling, energy audits, facility retrofits and new construction
17 custom design options.
- 18 c. On-Site Generation, Interconnection and Net Metering: All customers wanting
19 to use on-site generation should have access to an effective interconnection
20 agreement with the utility. The agreement should govern all technical
21 requirements, metering and crediting procedures. Credits generated by net
22 metering should be awarded on a 1:1 ratio based on the customer’s rate.
- 23 d. Creation of Self-Help Groups: Community aggregation should be expanded.
24 Local governments should work with community based organizations to
25 create product and service buying groups that provide energy audits, building
26 retrofits new construction custom programs, appliance purchases and on-site
27 generation options. Local Infrastructure Refits: Education programs
28 concerning advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) need to expand. Outreach
29 activities should explain how two-way communication between the customer
30 and utility via the meter can help individual consumers, communities, service
31 providers and the utility collaboratively manage energy delivery and costs.
- 32 e. Utility Rate Reviews: A utility rate review could be initiated when a consumer
33 pursues a choice program offer, purchases new technology, retrofits facilities
34 or enters a service contract. We support PUCO approved procedures
35 providing consumers with utility-based rate reviews prior to any service
36 and/or technology purchase. Reviews should advise customers about possible
37 rate impacts and a listing of options that address the issues.

SECTION 3: COMMODITIES

SECTION 3: COMMODITIES

ANIMAL CARE

Animal Care

301

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Properly researched, veterinary approved and industry-tested poultry and
- 3 livestock practices that provide consumers with a wholesome food supply;
- 4 2. The Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board (OLCSB) and its uniform set of
- 5 standards governing the care and well-being of livestock in Ohio that maintains
- 6 food safety, encourages locally grown and raised food and protects Ohio farms
- 7 and families;
- 8 3. Policies written by the Ohio Department of Agriculture concerning the Ohio
- 9 Livestock Care Standards Board protect livestock farmers from random
- 10 inspections and inspections be conducted only after a written and signed
- 11 complaint is submitted by the person suspecting the violation;
- 12 4. A unified animal agriculture effort to educate the public concerning humane
- 13 farming practices;
- 14 5. An aggressive, comprehensive educational program presenting the facts of
- 15 livestock and poultry husbandry and production to elected officials, agencies,
- 16 allied industries, youth and the general public;
- 17 6. A continued proactive approach to the livestock care debate in Ohio;
- 18 7. Education about the difference between the Humane Society of the United States
- 19 (HSUS) and local humane animal agencies;
- 20 8. Development and delivery of programs to educate people about the differences
- 21 between livestock animals and companion animals;
- 22 9. Legislation to update and revise laws pertaining to the operation of humane
- 23 societies and the training of personnel;
- 24 10. Humane officers receive training on livestock care provided by livestock industry
- 25 experts;
- 26 11. Oversight authority of any livestock including animal care and cruelty complaints
- 27 rest with the Ohio Department of Agriculture and that all complaints of livestock
- 28 abuse (excluding companion animals) be investigated and processed by the Ohio
- 29 Department of Agriculture;
- 30 12. Livestock farmers become certified through their commodity organization's
- 31 quality assurance program;
- 32 13. Judicious use of antibiotic drugs in livestock production. Any drug restrictions
- 33 should be based only upon sound science and extensive research;
- 34 14. Development of state programs to increase large animal veterinarian and vet
- 35 technician student enrollment and their continued work with food and fiber
- 36 animals upon completion of their respective program;
- 37 15. Regulations governing the housing, care and movement of wild dangerous
- 38 animals and restrictions on ownership;
- 39 16. The Ohio attorney general's office investigate animal rights organizations for
- 40 false advertising; and
- 41 17. Livestock be considered or classified as personal property.

- 42 We oppose:
- 43 1. Legislation and/or ballot initiatives that restricts the private ownership or use of
- 44 livestock or that inhibits free trade of any livestock provided it meets Ohio
- 45 Department of Agriculture testing and import requirements;
- 46 2. The use of educational materials in our public schools that discourage use of
- 47 animal products;
- 48 3. The concept of animal “rights”, the associated elevation of animal rights to those
- 49 enjoyed by humans, and the expenditure of public funds to promote the concept of
- 50 animal rights;
- 51 4. Legislation that establishes felony penalties of first time offenders for violations
- 52 of animal cruelty law;
- 53 5. Legislation that makes crimes against animals equal to or greater than similar
- 54 crimes against people;
- 55 6. Privately incorporated humane societies receiving money from fines for animal
- 56 cruelty convictions;
- 57 7. Local regulation of livestock care through county; township or municipal
- 58 ordinance or ballot initiatives; and
- 59 8. Ballot issues or legislation that will regulate livestock care, food product and
- 60 other agriculture enterprise methods with no sound/proven science or accepted
- 61 valid, unbiased research.

Cervidae, Llama, Alpaca and Buffalo **302**

- 1 We support that cervidae, llama, alpaca and buffalo being kept under agricultural
- 2 farm conditions shall be considered livestock and are subject to the policies and
- 3 regulations as they relate to livestock.

Companion Animals **303**

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Legislation requiring appropriate vaccination for all pets;
- 3 2. Increased education and coordination of local responses to prevent the spread of
- 4 rabies including statewide rabies vaccinations of dogs; and
- 5 3. Reasonable regulation, inspection and licensing of kennels and businesses
- 6 engaged in the commercial breeding and sale of pets.
- 7 We oppose:
- 8 1. Vet mandated vaccination programs except for rabies vaccinations which should
- 9 be performed by a licensed veterinarian and
- 10 2. Any restrictions on any method of sale (including auction) of a companion
- 11 animal.

Livestock and Poultry Diseases **304**

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. A voluntary animal disease traceability system capable of providing support for
- 3 animal disease control and eradication. Any such program must protect farmer
- 4 from liability for acts of others after livestock leaves the farmer's hands;
- 5 2. Uniform standards amongst states adopted with industry input for animal disease
- 6 traceability;

- 7 3. Collection of information and record keeping remaining private and not be held
8 by government;
- 9 4. The Ohio Department of Agriculture having the authority and funding necessary
10 to rapidly respond to animal diseases or bioterrorism;
- 11 5. The Ohio Department of Agriculture's disease prevention, eradication and control
12 programs for reportable diseases, foreign animal diseases and emerging diseases
13 of economic or public health significance;
- 14 6. Livestock virology testing capability at ODA that is vital to livestock export;
- 15 7. The continued use of current Scrapie ID System for sheep and goats;
- 16 8. Adequate staff or contracted services be maintained at the Department of
17 Agriculture diagnostic lab to meet the requirements of accreditation;
- 18 9. Collaborative diagnostic work and cost savings programs between the Ohio
19 Department of Agriculture and The Ohio State University College of Veterinary
20 Medicine; and
- 21 10. Additional research in animal health.
- 22 We oppose reclassifying certain commonly used animal health products as
23 prescription and/or controlled drugs.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

Crop Protectants

311

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The Ohio Department of Agriculture to continue to investigate the pesticides
3 needed for specialty agricultural production and exercise the authority granted to
4 states for registration of such pesticides.
- 5 2. All persons handling pesticides be educated of the dangers and follow all
6 regulations dealing with proper handling and labeling procedures.
- 7 3. Handlers and farmers be educated that leaks, spills and labeling accidents may be
8 dangerous to the environment and human health.
- 9 4. Increased funding by the State of Ohio and federal government of the
10 interregional (IR4) program to handle the numerous requests for minor use
11 pesticides registration approvals. Where possible, similar crops/species should be
12 tested, certified, and registered as a group.
- 13 5. The Ohio Department of Agriculture exert due diligence in making sure that
14 Section 18 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA)
15 requests are filed and approved in a timely manner, as farmers need to be advised
16 of changes that would affect the ability to use minor use pesticides in agricultural
17 production.
- 18 6. The development of methyl bromide alternatives for Ohio growers.
- 19 7. Ohio Department of Agriculture to minimize the burden on landowners of
20 pesticide restrictions to protect endangered species.
- 21 8. An Ohio program for the return and proper disposal of outdated and unregistered
22 agricultural pesticides without cost or liability to the owner, ODA coordinating
23 this program and we support legislation to protect the ODA from legal liability for
24 providing this important service.

- 25 9. Further development and promotion of Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
 26 practices in Ohio. IPM is a defensible use of pesticides because it focuses use
 27 where problems have been identified.
- 28 10. OARDC to conduct more intensive research into alternative and traditional
 29 methods of controlling emerging pest problems.
- 30 11. Fees be commensurate with services provided to maintain farmer access to Ohio
 31 Department of Agriculture private pesticide licensing programs.
- 32 12. Strict adherence by applicators, either commercial or private, in following label
 33 and application instructions to promote proper management and guard against
 34 liability.
- 35 13. Increased use of mini-bulk, eco-packs, and other returnable and recyclable
 36 pesticide containers in a variety of sizes.
- 37 14. The requirement that all people who apply chemicals or pesticides on residential,
 38 commercial, or agricultural property have appropriate applicator certification for
 39 restricted-use pesticides.
- 40 15. Chemical companies to assist in pesticide certification training.
- 41 16. Efforts to maintain current state laws that provide some exemption for intrastate
 42 movement of agricultural production materials from U.S. Department of
 43 Transportation regulations on transportation of hazardous materials.
- 44 17. Ohio State University to actively complete Ohio crop profiles detailing actual
 45 pesticide use and potential economical alternatives for use by the U.S.
 46 Environmental Protection Agency as it implements the Food Quality Protection
 47 Act.
- 48 18. Ohio and farmer participation in the Drift Watch, Ohio Sensitive Crop Registry or
 49 similar programs to protect chemical sensitive crops, bees and other pollinators.
- 50 19. Applicator awareness of sensitive crops and registered apiaries before applying
 51 insecticides and herbicides so they may take measures to avoid pesticide drift.
- 52 We oppose:
- 53 1. Additional legislation or regulations requiring applicators to give prior notice of
 54 proposed pesticide applications.
- 55 2. Non-affected parties having the right to bring suit or injunction against pesticide
 56 users for possible misuse of chemicals.
- 57 3. Reporting of non-restricted use pesticide application.

Anhydrous Ammonia

312

- 1 We support research and education on safe additives and deterrents for anhydrous
 2 ammonia that would prevent its illegal use and recommend a program to implement the
 3 use of such additives and deterrents.

COMMODITIES

Livestock

321

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. An agricultural business climate that promotes the livestock industry and ensures
 3 the opportunity for the livestock industry to remain viable in Ohio;

- 4 2. All farmers to become more engaged in positively promoting and creating
5 awareness of the benefits of livestock production in Ohio; and
6 3. The recalculation of the bonding formula for livestock dealers, auctions and
7 processors in order to protect the livestock producers of Ohio.

8 We oppose any attempt to reduce the current animal number threshold for livestock
9 facility permitting, however, we believe the regulating agencies should adopt regulations
10 for livestock facilities not solely based on these levels, but devise a formula considering
11 factors such as:

- 12 1. The number of animals;
13 2. Method of farm management (feed lot, managed grazing);
14 3. Water Usage (ground or surface supply); and
15 4. Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan.

Dairy

322

1 We support:

- 2 1. The right to market milk through any licensed dairy processor. We will work with
3 milk cooperatives to increase the potential for higher milk prices paid to Ohio
4 dairy farmers;
5 2. State legislation that enhances the ability of farmer cooperatives to coordinate the
6 efforts of farmers to bargain for the price and terms of sale of their products. This
7 relates to bargaining with processors, dealers or manufacturers;
8 3. Legislation or a voluntary pooling program that equalizes or creates equity among
9 and between producers of a commodity priced under market order or other state
10 coordination authority;
11 4. A dairy policy that works with other farm groups and cooperatives to raise dairy
12 profitability and reduce price volatility;
13 5. Modifications in Federal Milk Marketing Orders that will enhance the price of
14 milk received by farmers and eliminate the make allowance;
15 6. When a proposed amendment to the Federal Milk Marketing Order structure is
16 offered, a resulting “no” vote should not result in the whole order being
17 eliminated;
18 7. Improved minimum health and food safety standards for fluid milk based on
19 sound science;
20 8. Changing the zero tolerance to negligible risk;
21 9. Research, development and economic enhancements to promote the capabilities
22 of Ohio’s dairy industry in identifying and capturing greater export and niche
23 markets;
24 10. Dairy farmers’ proportional representation be maintained on the Milk Sanitation
25 Board;
26 11. Efforts to revise milk inspection regulations to make the penalties for antibiotic
27 contaminated milk more closely reflect the degree of the infraction. If an
28 infraction occurs, the sample in question must be held for seven days to allow for
29 further testing;
30 12. Ohio dairy farmers to join the Ohio Dairy Producers Association;
31 13. All dairy farmers to consider participating in the Cooperatives Working Together
32 (CWT) program;

- 33 14. Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board to revisit the rule on tail docking in the
 34 dairy industry and leave it to the producers' discretion; and
 35 15. The Ohio Department of Agriculture and/or departments of health to effectively
 36 enforce the regulations dealing with the refrigeration of dairy products at the retail
 37 and institutional level, including schools.

38 We oppose:

- 39 1. The concept of "pool-riding" and other pricing strategies whereby farmers from
 40 different marketing orders circumvent the intended function of the milk marketing
 41 orders to gain an unfair pricing advantage;
 42 2. All forms of misleading advertising that suggest or imply an imitation product
 43 contains a natural dairy product;
 44 3. The importation of milk protein concentrates, ultra-filtered milk and casein that
 45 are not subject to dairy tariff rate quotas consistent with World Trade
 46 Organization rules; and
 47 4. The sale of raw milk directly to consumers without proper regulations in place to
 48 ensure the highest level of food safety.

Equine

323

1 We support:

- 2 1. Equine continue to be defined and recognized as livestock;
 3 2. Ohio's equine industry to communicate with other commodity groups and to
 4 cooperatively work together;
 5 3. Development and establishment of an equine promotion and marketing program
 6 for the state of Ohio. Such a program should include representation from all
 7 segments of Ohio's equine industry;
 8 4. Ohio Department of Agriculture's Statistics Service to obtain and include equine
 9 data in its annual report as it does for all other species of livestock;
 10 5. Education of elected officials, agencies, and allied industries pertaining to equine
 11 related issues and urge an economic impact study, including a census of equine;
 12 6. Development of humane equine processing and rendering facilities in Ohio;
 13 7. Increasing the number of and the quality of equestrian riding trails on local metro,
 14 state and federal land;
 15 8. Legislation that provides additional revenue from Ohio's pari-mutuel and related
 16 gaming to keep Ohio's equine industry competitive with surrounding states;
 17 9. Maintaining or increasing the current number of race days at all Ohio race tracks;
 18 10. Maintenance of standardbred, thoroughbred and quarter horse breed funds from
 19 the pari-mutuel and video lottery terminal taxes collected;
 20 11. OSU Extension's Regional Equine Information Network Systems (REINS)
 21 program;
 22 12. Recognizing the Ohio Equine Industry Coalition as the voice of Ohio's equine
 23 industry; and
 24 13. The Ohio Racing Commission continue to allocate funds to the agricultural
 25 component of the racing industry.

- Aquaculture** **324**
- 1 We support the Ohio Department of Agriculture to promote and oversee the
2 aquaculture industry.
- Grain** **325**
- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Continuing research on management of grain diseases and pests; and
3 2. The development of new, end-user driven seed varieties.
- Grain Handling** **326**
- 1 We support amending the Ohio Grain Warehousing Law to exempt from licensing
2 written bailment agreements between farmers or farmers and landlords up to 50,000
3 bushels per year.
- Grain Indemnity** **327**
- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Legislation that keeps any funds and interest earned intended for the grain
3 indemnity fund from being diverted into state general revenue funds;
4 2. Additional funding for increased inspection and compliance efforts within the
5 grain indemnity program in times of increased risk;
6 3. The Ohio Department of Agriculture to maintain the Grain Indemnity Fund at an
7 adequate level; and
8 4. The Grain Indemnity Fund paying 100% in all transactions and deferred payment
9 contract for grain delivered in the current crop year or delivered not more than 90
10 days prior to the ODA director's suspension of the grain handler's license.
- Grain Grading Procedures and Grain Moisture Testing** **328**
- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Research to find more efficient, accurate and consistent grain testing and
3 sampling devices and procedure and
4 2. Continual evaluation and certification of grain moisture and grain grading systems
5 and procedures to improve the validity of the process.
- Seed Regulation** **329**
- 1 We oppose:
- 2 1. Any law that would require seed handlers/conditioners to register their operations
3 and maintain samples for the purpose of seed piracy reporting and enforcement
4 and
5 2. Any law that would involve the Ohio Department of Agriculture in policing seed
6 partner agreements.
- Grains and Oilseeds Marketing** **330**
- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Members to utilize component pricing opportunities and
3 2. Improvements to the delivery system to the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME)
4 that support a more uniform convergence of cash grain and CME values.

Grazing Lands **331**

1 We support

- 2 1. The Ohio Grazing Lands Initiative's efforts to build and provide support, both
- 3 technical and financial, for Ohio's grazing lands and
- 4 2. The efforts of the Ohio Forage and Grasslands Council to represent, develop and
- 5 promote the hay and forage industry in Ohio.

Greenhouse and Specialty Crops **332**

1 We support:

- 2 1. The promotion of Ohio's specialty crops such as greenhouse, fruit, nursery crops,
- 3 field floral, vegetables, vineyards and wineries. This includes support in
- 4 lobbying, marketing, financing, insuring and securing energy supplies and
- 5 adequate research and development funds; and
- 6 2. Laws establishing procedures for the removal or care of abandoned or neglected
- 7 vineyards, orchards or conifers, and other similar crops, including those located
- 8 on publicly owned properties.

Honey and Bees **333**

1 We support:

- 2 1. Counties to make sure there is adequate support for county bee inspection
- 3 programs;
- 4 2. The increase of public awareness, educational programs and research by The Ohio
- 5 State University to improve the population, health, and productivity of the
- 6 honeybee, including breeding and other techniques to improve resistance to mites,
- 7 hive beetles, and diseases detrimental to honeybees;
- 8 3. The Ohio Department of Agriculture to increase state funding to educate farmers
- 9 and individuals on beekeeping to encourage more Ohioans to become involved in
- 10 beekeeping and to raise awareness;
- 11 4. Ohio Department of Agriculture to maintain an apiary section capable of serving
- 12 the needs of the industry, enforcing current code sections and addressing industry
- 13 challenges;
- 14 5. Making changes to Ohio Revised Code to allow Ohio Department of Agriculture
- 15 to determine and assess fees for the Ohio apiary program;
- 16 6. Multiple funding mechanisms to increase beekeeping opportunities in the state;
- 17 7. The development of an improved insurance product for the apiary industry that
- 18 will cover foreseeable risks at a reasonable cost;
- 19 8. Implementation of the findings of the 2010 Ohio Honey Bee Task Force; and
- 20 9. ODA, Ohio EPA, US EPA, and other licensing agencies to apply scientific
- 21 research when approving chemical use that may adversely affect bee health.
- 22 10. Specific education efforts should be focused towards pesticide applicators in an
- 23 effort to mitigate the risk of pesticide product application that may be harmful to
- 24 honey bees.

Maple Syrup**334**

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Additional research at the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center
 - 3 and The Ohio State University on sweet tree seed and control of parasites and
 - 4 disease on maple trees.
 - 5 2. Maintaining the services of a maple specialist within Ohio State University
 - 6 Extension.
 - 7 3. Designation of maple syrup as Ohio's official state syrup.
 - 8 4. Offering information/educational programs to increase interest in sugar bush
 - 9 production and retention.
 - 10 5. Recognizing sugar bushes as part of a wood lot management plan to maintain
 - 11 eligibility for CAUV.

Timber**335**

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Timber marketing information programs, promoting the industry as a long-term
 - 3 investment, and educational efforts to promote increased timber production in
 - 4 Ohio;
 - 5 2. Ohio Department of Agriculture and Ohio Department of Natural Resources
 - 6 funding for monitoring, treatment, quarantine and control of affected areas;
 - 7 3. Permanent eradication of invasive insect pests through education, early detection
 - 8 and removal;
 - 9 4. All levels of government to provide additional levels of funding for education,
 - 10 research, awareness and reforestation of lands affected by emerald ash borer;
 - 11 5. All timber owners to have a forest management plan;
 - 12 6. Farmers and woodland owners to utilize an operation management plan (OMP)
 - 13 approved by their local Soil and Water Conservation District Board of
 - 14 Supervisors, the technical support of the Division of Forestry, Ohio Department
 - 15 of Natural Resources, other private certified foresters, and the financial support of
 - 16 the Farm Service Agency (FSA) in managing their woodlands;
 - 17 7. Farmers and woodland owners to require timber buyers and harvesters to
 - 18 incorporate Best Management Practices (BMPs) and a harvest management plan
 - 19 in the development and harvesting of their woodland resources and utilize a
 - 20 contract of sale that follows the minimum basic standards and rights as
 - 21 recommended by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry;
 - 22 8. The Loggers Standard Council and Ohio Forestry Association to pursue more
 - 23 direct oversight of the master logger programs to ensure that master loggers are
 - 24 following the program's specifications;
 - 25 9. Landowners to include a contractual requirement that a master logger be on site
 - 26 for timber harvests;
 - 27 10. The concept of state, national and private demonstration plots to show the
 - 28 necessity and desired impacts of sound silvicultural practices;
 - 29 11. The state forests stay under the management of the Ohio Department of Natural
 - 30 Resources Division of Forestry;
 - 31 12. The continued harvest of timber on state owned land; and

- 32 13. Timber and forest landowners to utilize USDA NRCS EQIP Funds. Funds for
 33 forest land projects should be cost shared at a rate of 50 percent in order to have
 34 more positive impact on the environment and be made available to more
 35 landowners.

Tobacco

336

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The State of Ohio Administration and General Assembly to include provisions for
 - 3 tobacco farms in future settlements with tobacco companies.
 - 4 2. The State of Ohio Administration and General Assembly reinstating the funding
 - 5 for the Southern Ohio Agricultural and Community Development Foundation
 - 6 (SOACDF).
 - 7 3. The SOACDF Board of Trustees in their investment of funds in agricultural
 - 8 development, educational assistance and economic development.
 - 9 4. Continuation and restructuring of the burley tobacco grower's co-op to meet the
 - 10 changing needs of burley tobacco growers.
 - 11 5. Inclusion of an Ohio Tobacco grower or growers' interest on the Council for
 - 12 Burley Tobacco.
- 13 We oppose litigation allowing tobacco farmers to become a party to lawsuits aimed at
 14 recovering damages claimed due to use of tobacco products.

COMMODITY INSPECTION

Inspection Programs

341

- 1 We support state and federal commodity inspection agencies to periodically review
 2 prerequisites and qualifications of personnel involved in inspection and require
 3 continuing education to ensure inspectors are familiar with the industry they serve.

State Meat Inspection

342

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. A state maintained meat inspection program that allows the meat to enter
 - 3 interstate trade;
 - 4 2. The reclassification of domestically raised meat rabbits as an amenable species
 - 5 for purposes of slaughter inspection;
 - 6 3. Changes in the specifications of state contracts for institutional purchases to allow
 - 7 small packers to bid with supplies smaller than 40,000 pounds;
 - 8 4. State grading be accepted in lieu of federal grades;
 - 9 5. Economically feasible regulations for all, state inspected meat processing plants
 - 10 that maintains food safety standards; and
 - 11 6. The Ohio Department of Agriculture meat inspectors be trained so that
 - 12 inspections will be uniform.
 - 13 7. The ability of producers to sell domestically raised rabbits harvested at a state
 - 14 inspected facility in any wholesale or retail market within the state.

FOOD SAFETY

Food Quality and Safety

351

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Regulatory agencies that have jurisdiction over our food supply have a
- 3 coordinated plan so they can respond quickly to give assurance that the U.S. food
- 4 supply is wholesome and nutritious.
- 5 2. Statements and decisions by state and national government officials be based on
- 6 scientific fact rather than emotional appeals.
- 7 3. A change from zero tolerance to negligible risk.
- 8 4. Promoting and educating the public, media, retailers, food service employees, and
- 9 others on how to use sanitary practices in the handling and preparation of food;
- 10 5. The Ohio Produce Marketing Agreement Initiative.
- 11 6. Additional funding to continue the Ohio State University Extension Good
- 12 Agricultural Practices Project in Ohio.
- 13 7. The development of cost effective third party fresh produce audit verification
- 14 programs to meet market place demands.
- 15 8. Resources be developed to assist members in complying with third party audit
- 16 certification requirements.
- 17 9. Maintaining separate food safety regulations for honey, maple syrup and
- 18 sorghum.
- 19 10. ODNR considering the effect of animal intrusion on food safety when
- 20 establishing seasons, bag limits, issuing nuisance permits.
- 21 11. Producer education and training on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) to
- 22 intelligently discuss and answer consumer questions on food safety.
- 23 We oppose farmers being required to certify that no chemical residue is present on
- 24 food products sold at retail.

Food Labeling

352

- 1 Agricultural products that are produced using approved biotechnology should not be
- 2 required to designate individuals' inputs or specific technologies on the product label.
- 3 We support the Ohio Department of Agriculture requiring all food labels in the state
- 4 be able to substantiate their claims through sound scientific testing.
- 5 We oppose all use of false and misleading statements on labels, promotional materials
- 6 or other advertising for food products.

Farm and Farmer's Markets

353

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Working with the Ohio Department of Agriculture and Ohio Department of
- 3 Health to monitor enforcement of the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code, and other
- 4 food safety regulations, as they apply to farm markets, roadside stands and other
- 5 farmers retailing, processing, or distributing food.
- 6 2. Recommending technical corrections to the Ohio Revised Code to assure the
- 7 consistent enforcement and interpretation of the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code
- 8 and other food safety regulations related to public health issues.

- 9 3. Working with other interested parties to address insurance, zoning and other
10 regulatory compliance issues that impact the viability of Ohio direct agricultural
11 marketing.
12 4. Creating consistent tiers of inspection fees at farmer's markets for meat, poultry
13 and eggs.
14 5. The definition of a farm market as a market where fifty percent or more of the
15 gross income received from the market is derived from product raised on farms
16 owned or operated by the market operator in a normal year.
17 6. The current exemption of farm markets from township and county zoning.
18 7. The continued equitable government funding of the W.I.C. Farmers' Market
19 Nutrition Program and the Senior Nutrition Program as beneficial programs for
20 Ohio agriculture and Ohio citizens.
21 8. Expanding the Senior Coupon/Voucher program to all Ohio counties for obtaining
22 produce from participating local farmers.
23 9. Improving the ability for farmer's markets and individual vendors to accept
24 electronic benefit transfer (EBT) programs and food coupons.
25 We oppose local governments exceeding state regulations on farmer's markets.

CONTRACTING

Bargaining Contract Marketing

361

- 1 We support amendments to the Ohio Agricultural Contract Marketing Law to
2 accomplish the following:
3 1. A more equitable means of resolving processor-farmer disputes. This type of
4 change should include the elimination or extension of the March 31 bargaining
5 deadline and provide for mediation;
6 2. Mandatory deductions and forwarding of agricultural association member dues
7 made by the processing company to which deliveries are made;
8 3. Increased fines for unfair bargaining practices; and
9 4. The requirement that multi-year contracts shall deal only with a farmer's right to
10 grow a commodity, not quality or price.

Production Contracting

362

- 1 We support:
2 1. Increased industry communication, education and other necessary actions that will
3 improve farmer/contractor cooperation and partnering and
4 2. Reasonable agricultural contracting legislation that provides needed farmer
5 protections without imposing unreasonable burdens on farmers and processors,
6 although we prefer national legislation.

MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Marketing and Promotion

371

- 1 We support working with the Ohio Grocers Association to ensure that consumers
2 have access to a reasonable variety of food products and that our farmer members have a
3 market for their products.

Commodity Promotion**372**

1 We support:

- 2 1. The commodity organizations in their promotional efforts and continued check off
3 funding;
4 2. Commodity organizations in building consumer confidence; and
5 3. The Ohio Proud Program and its efforts to educate consumers in buying Ohio
6 agricultural products.

7 In considering the implementation of or any change to a state commodity check-off
8 program at least one of the following farmer protections must be met:

- 9 1. The program must provide for a referendum prior to implementation.
10 2. The program must provide for the right of refund.

Livestock Marketing**373**

1 We support:

- 2 1. New marketing concepts, including those employing electronic technology that
3 would enhance farmer income;
4 2. Livestock marketing agencies to initiate pilot projects to improve marketing
5 methods;
6 3. State government to work closely with local groups to retain current and establish
7 new harvest and meat packing facilities in Ohio communities; and
8 4. Mobile meat processors in Ohio.

Marketing and Risk Management**374**

1 We support:

- 2 1. Programs that provide farmers with pertinent marketing and risk management
3 alternatives;
4 2. Members take advantage of the marketing and informational opportunities offered
5 by companies broadcasting on the satellite network and via the Internet;
6 3. Bringing together farmers, commodity organizations, processors, marketing
7 organizations, colleges and Ohio State University Extension to broaden
8 agricultural markets and develop and enhance awareness of risk management
9 tools;
10 4. Entities that identify and support farmer owned businesses that will produce
11 value-added products from agricultural commodities;
12 5. Alternative methods of commodity marketing that take advantage of innovative
13 techniques;
14 6. The creation of value-added agricultural facilities;
15 7. The rights of farmers to gain access to markets through equity ownership of
16 processing plants and other marketing opportunities;
17 8. The continued state funding of the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbank
18 to utilize surplus Ohio farm products to feed needy Ohioans; and
19 9. The continuation of OFBF's Farmers Feed our Needs projects.

Agritourism **375**

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Agritourism and its viability in Ohio;
- 3 2. The Ohio Revised Code containing a definition of agritourism which should be
- 4 applied uniformly throughout the state; and
- 5 3. Ohio law providing adequate landowner and operators protection associated with
- 6 agritourism.

New Uses for Agricultural Products **376**

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Expanding the funding of research and development of alternative uses of
- 3 agricultural commodities for sources of energy, medical supplies, nutraceutical,
- 4 building supplies, polymers, biodegradable packaging, etc.;
- 5 2. The BioHio Ag Research Park and the Food and Agricultural Technology
- 6 Commercialization and Economic Development Program (ATECH),
- 7 AgBioscience Innovation Grant (ABIG) and Research Enhancement Competitive
- 8 Grant Program (RECGP); and
- 9 3. Ohio Bio Preferred purchasing program.

Ohio Fairs **377**

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Exempting agricultural societies and historical societies from amusement taxes
- 3 levied by municipalities;
- 4 2. Fair boards to place more emphasis on agriculture and agricultural youth activities
- 5 at their respective fairs;
- 6 3. The continued efforts for promotion of farm products, including new and
- 7 specialized products, featured at the Ohio State Fair;
- 8 4. Additional funding for local junior fairs as administered through the Ohio
- 9 Department of Agriculture budget;
- 10 5. Strong measures by 4-H, FFA, Fair Boards and the Ohio Department of
- 11 Agriculture to prevent and discourage livestock tampering and promote good
- 12 animal husbandry at livestock shows, provide quality assurance training for
- 13 market animal youth exhibitors, and refocus these programs on their original
- 14 educational purpose. This should also include development and communication
- 15 of a strong code of ethics;
- 16 6. Legislation that would prevent a board of county commissioners from reducing or
- 17 diminishing any interest of a county or independent agricultural society without
- 18 the consent of the affected agricultural society; and
- 19 7. That the Ohio Department of Agriculture, not the State of Ohio Auditor’s office,
- 20 do the auditing of county fair boards.
- 21 8. County, independent and state fairs to adopt the use of electronic identification
- 22 (EID) tags.
- 23 9. Ohio fairs developing biosecurity plans to address human and animal health.

SECTION 4: PROPERTY RIGHTS & TAXES

SECTION 4: PROPERTY RIGHTS & TAXES

INDEMNITY

Indemnification

401

1 We support the continuation of the Ohio Department of Agriculture's indemnification
2 program for losses of agricultural products when products are impounded, farms are
3 quarantined, or movement or sales are restricted in the public's interest. Farmers should
4 be promptly and fairly compensated. Farmers should not be held responsible for
5 conditions beyond their control. We support that indemnification programs be fully
6 funded.

7 Ohio Farm Bureau should conduct a study to determine the available methods of
8 protecting farmers who prepay for crop and farm inputs.

9 Any indemnification fund that is paid for by farmers should only be used to protect
10 farmer losses.

Dog Laws and Livestock Indemnity Claims

402

1 We encourage member Farm Bureaus to work with their county government to
2 promote better understanding and emphasize enforcement of Ohio's dog law. The law
3 provides for indemnity for damage from dogs, black vultures and coyote kills and we
4 support the continuation and full funding of this indemnity. We urge close cooperation
5 between dog wardens and wildlife officers in processing dog, black vulture and coyote
6 indemnity claims. The indemnity should be adequate to replace the loss with a similar
7 commercial animal of like breeding, age, and condition.

8 We urge livestock farmers to carry adequate insurance to cover loss of unusually
9 valuable animals.

10 We support financial incentive programs focusing on the prevention of animal control
11 problems rather than their effects.

12 We support county dog wardens recognizing milk, meat, or fiber producing exotic
13 animals as livestock when paying indemnity claims.

14 We support the development of a mandatory credible training program for all animal
15 control officers that specializes in dog laws, the identification of damage inflicted by
16 wildlife and domestic animals to livestock, and clearly determines what constitutes
17 animal abuse, neglect and cruelty.

18 We support stronger dog laws which give dog wardens and/or judges more options
19 and the necessary authority to appropriately deal with domestic dogs that have killed
20 livestock.

PROPERTY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Eminent Domain

411

1 We oppose government entities taking prime farmland for public purposes, including
2 but not limited to public water supplies, public utility pipelines, highways, metropolitan
3 parks, linear parks, wildlife areas and trails. Where such facilities are needed for the
4 public welfare, the government entity should:

- 5 1. Purchase land areas from willing sellers when possible;
- 6 2. Assume all legal responsibilities and tax obligations for the property acquired by
- 7 eminent domain, for example CAUV recoupment;
- 8 3. Compensate farmers and other landowners and leaseholders for property taken,
- 9 and right of ways/easements, inconvenience suffered, and for damage that may
- 10 occur to them and to nearby property owners;
- 11 4. Determination of compensation should be made prior to project initiation, except
- 12 for true cases of public exigency;
- 13 5. Limit wellhead protection requirements for municipal water sources to real case
- 14 scenarios - for example, light sandy soils;
- 15 6. Pay for capital costs caused by wellhead protection ordinances;
- 16 7. Replace water supplies at no cost to the landowner for as long as the landowner
- 17 has a need for water; and
- 18 8. Mitigate adverse effects to adjoining property owners for any facility that may be
- 19 developed.

20 The condemning agency should first establish the need for the project by using
 21 cost/benefit analysis, and availability of capital funds for the project. Funds should be
 22 made available to the landowner for an appeal process before condemning the land. All
 23 necessary economic impact studies and environmental impact studies, etc. should be
 24 completed prior to initiating condemnation. Any damage occurring should be reimbursed
 25 to the landowner.

26 Ohio should broaden its definition of ‘public notice’ for ODOT construction projects
 27 to facilitate as much local input as practicable.

28 When the state publicly identifies a corridor for a projected state highway project, all
 29 the land in that corridor must be purchased within three years of identification of the
 30 corridor or, if not, all the restrictions on the property should expire. If a proposed project
 31 is delayed for a period of 18 months or more, the landowner should be compensated 10
 32 percent of the fair market value of the land.

33 We believe municipalities should be limited in their use of condemnation proceedings
 34 to secure land and facilities outside of the municipal corporation.

35 We oppose the practice of eminent domain for private development purposes.

36 We believe government entities should compensate original landowners for loss of
 37 use of their land and for any profits realized on resale of land taken by eminent domain.
 38 Landowners of property taken by eminent domain should be compensated at prevailing
 39 market rates, including best alternate uses, established before the threat of eminent
 40 domain is publicly known.

41 If the original public use of a property taken by eminent domain is abandoned, the
 42 previous landowner and adjacent landowners should have a right of first refusal to
 43 purchase the property.

44 Metropolitan parks and/or park districts have the power of eminent domain. We
 45 oppose the use of eminent domain for recreational purposes. If eminent domain is to be
 46 used outside the “base county” of the metro park and/or park district, the county
 47 commissioners in that outside county must approve the eminent domain action.

48 We support legislation that allows conservation easements to supersede eminent
 49 domain.

50 Ohio's quick take statute should be amended to limit the government's right of quick
51 take to emergency actions only.

52 We support clarification regarding the use of eminent domain by private pipeline
53 companies.

Railroad and Canal Land Abandonment

412

1 Many railroad lines and canal lands have been abandoned with tracks and bridges
2 already removed. When the railroad or canal has ceased to function, if the abandoned
3 right-of-way had been purchased, it should be offered to the individual adjacent property
4 owners first, at a fair market price. If an agreement cannot be reached, a committee of
5 three (one appointed by the buyer, one by the seller, and a third member by the other two)
6 should be appointed to establish a fair market price. If the railroad or canal had an
7 easement, then the right-of-way should revert back to the adjacent landowner.

8 Abandoned railroad crossings on township and county roads should be restored to
9 proper grade.

10 Abandoned railroad property should be disposed of within two years after the rails are
11 removed.

12 Land surveys should be conducted of all abandoned railroad property whenever the
13 real estate is transferred. The railroad company should pay cost of survey.

14 We support class-action litigation filed on behalf of landowners adjacent to
15 abandoned railroad lines against railroads that have used the railroad lines for utility
16 easements in contravention of the landowners' property rights.

Bicycle, Recreational, Equine and Greenway Trails

413

1 When abandoned rail lines or other areas are converted into bicycle, recreational,
2 equine and greenway trails, landowners' rights should be protected. The following
3 concerns need to be addressed:

- 4 1. The cost of adequate fencing, if desired by the adjoining landowner, be borne by
- 5 the developer;
- 6 2. Satisfactory law enforcement and security;
- 7 3. Safety of both the users and landowners;
- 8 4. Local government expense, including maintenance;
- 9 5. Protection of adjoining landowners from liability to trespassers;
- 10 6. Trespassing and littering;
- 11 7. Provision for parking facilities at various locations;
- 12 8. Proper drainage is maintained; and
- 13 9. Landowners maintain access via an easement when trails bisect property.

14 We oppose:

- 15 1. The development of bicycle, recreational trails and greenways when the purpose
- 16 is, in whole or part, to facilitate the annexation of additional tracts of land;
- 17 2. Legislation that denies or postpones any reversionary property rights or interest of
- 18 property owners adjacent to railroad, utility, or road right-of-ways that are
- 19 abandoned for any reason; and
- 20 3. The use of state gas taxes for the construction, improvement, and maintenance of
- 21 bikeways, bike transportation facilities and walkways.

22 We encourage:

- 23 1. The use of voluntary incentive-based programs for the creation and management
24 of trails and greenways;
- 25 2. The adoption of legislation that requires the trail developer to maintain fences,
26 provide drainage, and control weeds as required of railroads in Chapter 4959 of
27 the Ohio Revised Code. Between the time of abandonment of the railroad line
28 and construction of the trail, the adjoining landowner should be allowed to use the
29 abandoned railroad easement;
- 30 3. The adoption of legislation that requires that the integrity of the location of the
31 railroad line be maintained during development of the trail; and
- 32 4. Members to become active in local organizations involved in the planning,
33 acquisition and management of bicycle, recreational, equine and greenway trails.

Utility Easements

414

1 In order to protect landowners' rights and preserve important farmland, we urge that
2 utility easements follow existing corridors whenever possible.

3 Landowners or tenants should not be liable for any damage to underground or above
4 ground utilities that arise from normal farming practices.

5 Utilities should be responsible for damages occurring on landowners' property
6 including tile. We support legislation that would require public or private utility
7 companies to post a monetary bond or a cash deposit with the county before they are
8 allowed to install underground utility lines in the county to pay for right-of-way
9 restoration (i.e. tile, driveways, grade, etc.) Property damaged by the utility should be
10 repaired to original condition.

11 We recommend that all new buried utility lines be located at a minimum depth of 5
12 feet, or a mutually agreed upon depth, and that the property owner be notified five days
13 prior to actual installation.

14 We urge open dialogue between local public utilities, community leaders, businesses,
15 interstate pipeline companies and government agencies to ensure the proper planning and
16 development of local and interstate pipeline to serve growing communities.

17 Approval by the appropriate local political subdivision should be required before a
18 rural utility service can assess individual property owners.

19 When a public utility plans to procure easements and/or utilize existing easements,
20 said public utility shall notify the affected landowner by certified mail no later than 30
21 days prior to the date of the first public hearing.

22 Any proposed pipeline project must address the real need and the real environmental
23 issues, including but not limited to: disturbance of watersheds; tillage and drainage
24 systems; crop production loss; safety due to proximity of homes and buildings; and
25 devaluation of property values. In the event the pipeline is approved, the pipeline
26 company should be required to follow the agricultural mitigation provisions prepared by
27 the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. This requirement and
28 other restrictions should be clearly stated in an easement agreement between the pipeline
29 company and the landowners.

30 We oppose broader interpretation of existing right-of-way easements that allows
31 utilities to expand their access.

32 When the original use of a utility easement is completed, the law should allow for the
33 easement to be cancelled with proper notice and process.

Property Ownership Responsibility

415

1 Public landowners of real property including ODNR and other state government
2 agencies should be held to the same responsibilities, rules and laws as private
3 landowners.

4 We encourage the development and distribution of educational materials regarding
5 the responsibilities of property owners relative to line fences, surface and sub-surface
6 drainage, CAUV, Agriculture Districts, farm odors, dust, noise, use of roadway by farm
7 equipment and other good rural neighbor policies and customs. Such materials should be
8 available to all property buyers in cooperation with local realtors, lenders, county
9 recorder's offices and the Farm Bureau.

10 We support a requirement that adjoining owners be notified of changes in property
11 lines under new surveys.

12 We recommend that property owners plant trees, shrubs, etc in such a way that
13 ensures that the drip line of the mature plant is within the owner's property.

Drainage

416

1 We support Ohio's drainage law and will work with the local Soil and Water
2 Conservation Districts to inform farmers of its benefits. We urge county governments to
3 keep agricultural interests at the forefront in considering any drainage projects, and to
4 consider the economic loss to farmers when drainage ditches are not cleaned and
5 maintained. We oppose unreasonable regulations or legislation that unduly restricts the
6 drainage of agricultural lands without basis in sound science.

7 We believe it is a fundamental right of all farmers to improve their lands for crop
8 production. In order to ensure that this right is not taken away, we recommend that the
9 current drainage law be comprehensively reviewed and amended to address the following
10 concerns:

- 11 1. Require county government to clean or establish a drainageway system to ensure
12 roadway waters and their associated pollutants and biohazards are directed away
13 from agricultural commodities that may be affected.
- 14 2. Require a neighboring property owner, public utility or highway to provide access
15 to subsurface drainage outlets in accordance with Natural Resources Conservation
16 Service (NRCS) recommendations.
- 17 3. Require governmental authorities granting building permits and private entities
18 developing land should analyze the impact on neighboring property owners.
- 19 4. Require the installation of drainage facilities which meet Natural Resources
20 Conservation Service guidelines and which minimize the adverse impact on
21 neighboring property.
- 22 5. Provide the opportunity for property owners to collect compensation (plus
23 attorney fees and costs of the lawsuit) for any damages to a drainage system,
24 including those caused by an increase in the flow of surface water or a change in
25 the drainage pattern from a neighboring property.

- 26 6. Prohibit all development (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.) and any
 27 developers from adding more flow to agricultural land drainage systems without
 28 paying for needed improvements and long-term maintenance fees.
- 29 7. Protect and prevent the destruction of existing underground drainage systems and
 30 require those responsible for the damage of tile lines to repair lines and pay
 31 damages.
- 32 8. Establish a program to mark/record tile placement.
- 33 9. Enable county subdivision regulations to require drainage access for new lot
 34 splits.
- 35 10. Require the recording of petition ditch easements so that they may be discovered
 36 during property title searches.

37 We recommend farmers use cooperative agreements on ditches whenever possible.
 38 Any easement taken for drainage improvements shall be strictly limited to drainage
 39 improvements and maintenance and no other purposes.

40 We encourage and support a uniform state wide plan of action for petition ditches to
 41 ensure proper maintenance and easements. This includes providing for an easement on
 42 new residential developments with county ditches running through them. We believe that
 43 a ditch survey, conducted by the Soil and Water Conservation District or the county
 44 engineer, should be accepted by either party in the event a ditch project moves from one
 45 jurisdiction to the other, whether a cooperative or petition ditch.

46 Cost sharing should be available for all open and subsurface drainage practices when
 47 such practices will control soil erosion or result in other environmental benefits.

48 We encourage state, county, and municipal engineers to work with property owners
 49 and soil and water conservation districts where road drainage ties in with farm drainage.

50 We recommend that all units of government be required to maintain ditches and tile
 51 on their property, which drains the land of adjacent property owners.

52 We support establishing a universally recognized sign to mark tiles at road crossings
 53 and property boundaries. Placement of signs would be at the landowner's expense and
 54 option.

55 Landowners should be notified when maintained drainageway maintenance is going
 56 to occur. We encourage landowners to mark tile outlets in ditches to avoid damage by
 57 mowers. Individuals, utilities, and/or government agencies responsible for destroying
 58 marked tiles would be liable for restoration under appropriate agency supervision.

59 Landowners are responsible for both surface and subsurface drainage project costs in
 60 direct proportion to their acres that drain into the project.

61 We recommend that programs be developed to educate landowners about drainage
 62 laws through real estate transactions.

63 Whenever the state or county highway departments replace a culvert or small bridge
 64 over a dry run, the subsurface farm drainage tile that crosses under the highway at the
 65 same location should also be included in the project. Such tile should be replaced with
 66 highway grade tubing or concrete culvert. The length of the replacement should be the
 67 greater of the highway right of way or the project area.

68 All maintained drainageways, county maintained or otherwise, should be classified as
 69 "modified" or "historically channelized" maintained drainageways to retain their purpose
 70 of farm drainage and not be considered a navigable waterway subject to biological and
 71 recreational use designations.

72 We strongly encourage every county government to timely adopt effective
73 countywide drainage regulations.

74 We support the ODNR Division of Soil and Water in its efforts to meet Ohio’s rural
75 drainage challenges. This is an organized effort which consists of two parts: (1)
76 Analyzing Ohio’s drainage infrastructure needs and solutions, and (2) Development of
77 “Maintained Drainageway” Best Management Practice (BMP) Manual for maintenance
78 and construction.

79 We support increased adoption of innovative ditch geometry practices and the
80 provision of incentives to adopt such practices.

81 We support a better method to quantify the costs and benefits of a maintained
82 drainageway in the petition ditch law. We support efforts to streamline the petition ditch
83 process.

84 We support the adjustment for inflation of the 20% ditch maintenance fee for ditches.

85 Sellers of land in amounts below 20 acres should be required to disclose drainage
86 patterns and problems at the time of sale.

Adverse Possession

417

1 We support a change in the Ohio Revised Code that would require a person claiming
2 land by adverse possession to prove that he/she paid the taxes on the disputed property
3 during the time that he/she claims to have possessed the land adversely. This would be in
4 addition to all other elements of title by adverse possession as required by law.

5 We support legislation that would more clearly define what constitutes adverse
6 possession of land. We believe utilization of land across boundary lines for profit should
7 not constitute adverse possession.

Trespassing

418

1 We will support legislation to increase criminal penalties and establish a mandatory
2 fine and full restitution of property damaged by individuals found guilty of trespassing
3 and unauthorized activities.

4 We support legislation to clearly spell out landowners’ rights as they relate to
5 trespassers and provide landowners immunity from civil liability in connection with
6 injury, death or loss to trespassers.

7 We encourage local law enforcement to prosecute trespassers.

8 We support legislation that may provide for seizure of implements used in trespass,
9 such as all-terrain vehicles, snowmobiles, and vehicles and for an allowance of the
10 collection of damages that would be multiplied for remuneration.

11 We support legislation that strengthens “attractive nuisance laws” so as not to put
12 landowners at risk for unreasonable lawsuits.

13 To perform a boundary survey, the surveyor should be able to enter adjacent private
14 property as long as written notice is provided to adjacent landowners at least two days in
15 advance and the surveyor pays for any damages caused on the adjacent properties.

16 We support legislation that would prohibit the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles
17 (UAVs) over private property without the property owner’s permission.

Cemeteries **419**

1 We support and encourage our members to continue preserving our agricultural
 2 heritage by respecting on-farm cemeteries. We support the real property laws now in
 3 place, which keep a closed private cemetery where there have been no burials in 75 years
 4 the size and status it is today.

Homeland Security **420**

1 We support the protection of individual rights and property rights when affected by
 2 Homeland Security issues.

3 We oppose the mandatory use of social security numbers as a means of identification
 4 unless authorized under the Right to Privacy Act of 1974.

LAND USE

Land Use Planning **431**

1 We will work for sound land use legislation and programs.

2 We support the establishment of a farmland preservation strategy that coordinates and
 3 guides state and local policies, programs and actions so as to avoid and minimize the
 4 unnecessary and irretrievable conversion of productive agriculture land to nonagricultural
 5 uses. Ohio Department of Agriculture should maintain final decision authority on
 6 acceptance into the agriculture easement program.

7 We encourage the development of countywide, comprehensive land-use plans as an
 8 integral part of farmland preservation. Local control and local involvement should be
 9 emphasized.

10 We encourage members to serve on zoning commissions and on boards of zoning
 11 appeals.

12 We encourage members to be involved in the development and implementation of
 13 countywide comprehensive land-use plans.

14 We support the use of Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Funds for the
 15 preservation of farms that contain creeks, streams, woods, or natural wetlands.

16 We support the preservation of prime land (classes I and II) and other land especially
 17 capable of dairy, equine, livestock, fruit, forestry, and specialty crop production by
 18 encouraging involvement in the following programs:

- 19 1. Agriculture Easement Purchases
 - 20 Investigation, development and implementation of funding and tax incentive
 - 21 programs for the preservation of farmland through the acquisition and transfer of
 - 22 development rights and an impact fee paid by individuals who convert farmland
 - 23 to non-agricultural uses. When land is sold for development, an impact fee based
 - 24 on quality of land should be charged to the developer and used for farmland
 - 25 preservation.
- 26 2. Agriculture Easement Donations
 - 27 Research, funding, and implementations of voluntary programs to keep land in
 - 28 agricultural use.

- 29 3. Agriculture Districts
 30 Protection of land in accordance with the Farmland Preservation Act (agricultural
 31 districts). The statute helps landowners deal with water, sewer, and electric
 32 assessments, nuisance lawsuits and powers of eminent domain.
 33 The Agriculture District Law should be strengthened by:
 34 a. Lowering the acreage and percentage of land taken to trigger Ohio
 35 Department of Agriculture review of eminent domain.
 36 b. Requiring legal service on the eminent domain action by the Ohio Department
 37 of Agriculture.
 38 c. Providing greater protection against nuisance lawsuits.
 39 d. Allowing for deferred assessments for infrastructure improvements such as
 40 roads, sidewalks and private water companies, including transportation
 41 improvement districts.
 42 e. Providing additional protection against eminent domain.
 43 f. Creating a uniform agricultural district application process for all lands
 44 (whether the land is inside or outside of the city limits).
 45 g. Changing the Farmland Preservation Program rules to allow a farm that has
 46 acreage in two or more counties to submit one application in the county where
 47 the homestead is located, or where the majority of the acres are located.
- 48 3. Agriculture Security Areas
 49 Those operations that meet the definition of agriculture as currently defined in
 50 Ohio law, regardless of size, production method, or business structure, should be
 51 designated agriculture, not commercial. We support a reduction of the 500 acre
 52 threshold to 100 contiguous acres to enroll in an Agricultural Security Area
 53 (ASA), however, the incentive to enroll in an ASA should be higher the more
 54 acres that are enrolled.
- 55 4. Local and State Land Use Policies
 56 We recommend programs to address the following issues:
 57 a. Land use decisions made locally with adequate rural participation in sub-
 58 division regulations;
 59 b. Recognition of basic property rights of individuals. State law or regulation
 60 should not take away the economic value of property without fair
 61 compensation;
 62 c. Effective zoning to meet the needs of rural Ohio. We recognize the
 63 challenges being made to agricultural practices by zoning commissions and
 64 encourage members to fight these challenges and continue to support
 65 agriculture's exemptions from Ohio's zoning laws;
 66 d. Promotion of orderly development of urban areas including:
 67 (i) the concentration of further development;
 68 (ii) the avoidance of needless sprawl of both strip and leapfrog
 69 development;
 70 (iii) the redevelopment of existing urban areas already served by
 71 infrastructure and public services;
 72 (iv) the redirecting of business and industry into rehabilitated brownfields by
 73 providing appropriate incentives; and

- 74 (v) support for a reduction in taxation as an incentive for people who
- 75 rehabilitate old homes or build new homes on existing home sites.
- 76 e. Infrastructure repair and reinvestment rather than new infrastructure
- 77 development. In the case of new development, fully allocate all costs to the
- 78 land developers and purchasers. Urge passage of legislation giving clear
- 79 permission for political entities to impose impact fees on new non-agriculture
- 80 construction;
- 81 f. Coordination at all governmental levels, with consideration of adjoining land
- 82 uses from county to county and from community to community;
- 83 g. Long term highway construction right-of-way needs should be incorporated in
- 84 any comprehensive land use plan. The Ohio Department of Transportation
- 85 should make reasonable efforts to avoid taking prime farmland when planning
- 86 a road project;
- 87 h. The Ohio Department of Development should revise their program on “shovel
- 88 ready” sites to give priority to infill and redevelopment of property rather than
- 89 to clean sites of high acreage;
- 90 i. We oppose zoning restrictions on timber harvesting in municipalities and
- 91 other political subdivisions;
- 92 j. State and local economic development initiatives should be required to
- 93 include production agriculture in their recommendations;
- 94 k. We oppose efforts to impose the installation of riparian buffers through
- 95 zoning because it is a taking of private property. We encourage the
- 96 development of educational programs to improve the understanding of
- 97 farmland preservation and land-use issues. Some topics of importance are:
- 98 (i) Economic impact of the loss of prime farmland
- 99 (ii) Conservation Security Programs and Carbon Credit Programs
- 100 (iii) Economic importance of agriculture business and agriculture related
- 101 businesses of local economics.

Water and Sewer Rotary Fund 432

1 Under the Farmland Preservation Act, city councils must act upon agricultural
2 districts within the city limits. City councils may disapprove them because a water and
3 sewer assessment cannot be collected. Therefore, we strongly recommend that adequate
4 funds be maintained in the water and sewer rotary fund for use by municipalities so they
5 can approve agricultural districts within the city. A review of the water and sewer rotary
6 fund should be conducted to determine its role in the farmland preservation movement.

Transportation Improvement Districts 433

1 We oppose TIDS in their entirety. TIDS are quasi-governmental agencies with the
2 power of eminent domain, taxation of property, and trespassing rights over one’s own
3 private property

Joint Economic Development Districts and Zones 434

1 We support the use of Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDDs) and Joint
2 Economic Development Zones (JEDZ) as a way for cities, village and townships to
3 cooperate in the development of land.

- 4 We oppose:
- 5 1. Any JEDDs/JEDZ where all contracting parties and all property is not contiguous
 - 6 to the proposed district;
 - 7 2. Any JEDD/JEDZ that does not include the approval of the landowners owning a
 - 8 majority of the acreage in the proposed district; and
 - 9 3. Any JEDDs/JEDZ that does not include the majority of the land acreage that can
 - 10 be developed and is zoned as commercial property. Entities entering into a
 - 11 JEDD/JEDZ should have the ability to exempt from taxation any income derived
 - 12 from agricultural production.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

State Funding, Efficiency, and Shared Services 441

1 As a cost savings measure, we support the evaluation of increased efficiencies in local
 2 government. Furthermore, we should incentivize local governments to eliminate
 3 inefficiencies, both with respect to multiple units of government and within the unit itself.

4 We support allowing local governments the ability to share resources and to more
 5 efficiently offer services while still maintaining each unit's identity.

6 We support state legislation to provide a larger percentage of available funding for
 7 local governments.

8 We oppose the imposition of auditing fees and requirements that can burden local
 9 governments with excessive costs.

10 The limit on force accounts should be raised and indexed to inflation.

11 Court systems need to live within their budgets as set by the county commissioners.
 12 We support limitations on judges and prosecutors for the purpose of bypassing the
 13 appropriations process.

Accountability 442

1 We encourage more accountability to the general public by members of boards and
 2 commissions. The general public should elect members of park districts. Members of
 3 other boards, commissions (i.e. planning commission, zoning commission), water
 4 districts and sanitary districts should be appointed by the Board of County
 5 Commissioners or Board of Township Trustees. Any public entity that receives public
 6 tax money should be held accountable for the funds by audit available to the public.

7 The Ohio Revised Code specifies that after an elected public official has neglected his
 8 office for 90 days, the office shall be deemed vacant. We believe this is too lax and
 9 should be re-evaluated.

Conservancy Districts 443

1 We support:

- 2 1. Amendments to the law to increase transparency;
- 3 2. Requiring that Conservancy Board Trustees be either elected by the public or
- 4 appointed by the County Commissioners;
- 5 3. Restructuring the Boards of Conservancy districts to include stakeholder
- 6 representation (i.e. agricultural community, soil and water conservation districts,
- 7 residents);

- 8 4. Requiring County Commissioners' approval before a county outside the original
 9 conservancy district is included in any conservancy sub-district;
 10 5. Establish a method for a county to remove itself from a sub-district;
 11 6. Conservancy district flood control programs; and
 12 7. Changes to provide checks and balances of their operations and a resident voice.
 13 We oppose:
 14 1. Attempts to physically expand conservancy districts into additional jurisdictions.
 15 2. Expansion of the mission and authority of a Board beyond its legislated purpose.

Local Elected Officials **444**

1 We support the current judicial organizations based upon county elected judges. We
 2 oppose district judicial areas that combine several counties with one elected judge and
 3 several appointed magistrates.

4 County engineers should possess a civil or construction engineering qualification and
 5 not be required to be a certified surveyor.

6 Township trustees should be granted the authority to offer a reward for information
 7 leading to the arrest and conviction of individuals vandalizing township properties.

Annexation **445**

1 We continue to oppose balloon annexation whereby a narrow corridor leads to the
 2 annexation of large tracts.

3 We oppose any expansion of a municipality's right to require the approval of a plat
 4 beyond the three-mile radius found in current law.

Boards of Health/Health Districts **446**

1 We oppose local Boards of Health/Health Districts having authority over the
 2 placement of line fences.

3 We oppose local Boards of Health/Health Districts having the authority to regulate
 4 livestock, including the siting of facilities.

5 We support local legislative oversight for Boards of Health/Health Districts.

Mandates **447**

1 Neither the state nor federal government should place mandates without providing
 2 funds for the life of the mandate.

Public Library Services **448**

1 We support high quality public library services that promote continued learning by all
 2 citizens.

LAWSUITS

Environmental **451**

1 When lawsuits are filed on environmental and nuisance matters and the case is
 2 dropped, or fails, all court costs and attorney fees of the defendant, as well as the
 3 plaintiff, should be paid by the plaintiff.

Tort Reform **452**

1 We support civil litigation reform in Ohio.

2 We support constitutional limitations and control of civil tort litigation, including but
3 not limited to proper control of nuisance and medical malpractice lawsuits.

STATE GOVERNMENT

Cost Savings **461**

1 State agencies should incentivize managers and employees to save costs.

2 Incentives should be created to encourage agencies to reduce their spending.

3 Using performance audits, sunset review provisions and other available tools, the
4 legislature should review all services and programs and eliminate low-performing
5 programs to balance the state budget.

Public Employee Benefits and Compensation **462**

1 Public employee compensation should be commensurate with private company
2 salaries and benefits. Comparisons should only be made when similar work is being done
3 by individuals with similar experiences.

4 The state should conduct a comprehensive review of pay scales, job descriptions, and
5 qualifications.

6 The State of Ohio should continue to study health care pooling and encourage its
7 adoption, where appropriate.

8 State law should permit the use of health care pooling for all governmental entities.
9 State agencies and instrumentalities should be required to utilize health care pooling if it
10 realizes cost savings.

11 The state should review the eligibility to qualify for state and local government
12 employee benefits.

State Retirement Systems **463**

1 Public employee retirement plans should be comparable to those in the private sector.

2 1. Employer contributions to state/local government employee retirement systems
3 should be in line with employer taxes in the private sector.

4 2. Public retirement systems should be self-funded to meet their obligations. This
5 may require adjusting current rules including but not limited to:

6 a. Length of service to qualify;

7 b. Ability to receive retirement benefits before reaching federal retirement age;
8 and

9 c. Ability to rehire past retired members.

10 Government should consider a two-tier system where new employees have a
11 retirement system based on defined contributions.

Performance Audits **464**

1 Unbiased comprehensive performance audits should be conducted on state agencies
2 by outside entities.

3 More targeted program specific audits or compensation audits should also be utilized.

Sunset Review **465**

- 1 Sunset Review is a useful process and should be continued.
 2 In addition to boards, commissions, committees and councils the process should also
 3 be used to evaluate cabinet level state agencies.

Checks and Balances **466**

- 1 Specific criteria should be developed before creating dedicated or “rotary account”
 2 funds.
 3 State government should reduce reliance on fee and permits to fund programs and
 4 should recognize that fees are a form of taxation.
 5 Philosophically, OFBF supports giving the General Assembly and the Governor the
 6 primary oversight for funding priorities.
 7 1. Essential state programs should be funded by state tax dollars.
 8 2. Those programs not essential to state government should be studied and possibly
 9 referred for consolidation or elimination.
 10 3. To ensure rigorous consideration of programs, Ohio should adopt a “zero-base”
 11 budget system for general revenue funds.

Long Term Budgeting **467**

- 1 Ohio should adopt a long term, strategic approach to budgeting. The public and
 2 private sectors should both be engaged in the long term plan, which should be bipartisan
 3 in nature. The plan should include both financial aspects (such as economic projections)
 4 and social demographics. The planning process should not be binding on future
 5 policymakers and should be updated as needed. Programs that have long-term costs
 6 should not be initiated with one-time dollars.

Privatization of Programs and Assets **468**

- 1 A study should be commissioned to identify potential efficiencies in privatizing state
 2 services such as: workers’ compensation, the management of Ohio’s prisons, highway
 3 right-of-way maintenance (mowing, litter pick-up, etc.), property management and
 4 janitorial services. Recommendations should be implemented in a thoughtful manner
 5 without undue interruption to ongoing state business.
 6 State government should also prepare a central inventory of state properties and
 7 assets, and then utilize the central inventory to identify state owned property and assets
 8 that can be sold to or better managed by the private sector.

REGULATORY REFORM

Regulatory Reform **471**

- 1 We support the use of sound science and economic feasibility in the development and
 2 establishment of regulations applied to agriculture. We oppose the use of the
 3 precautionary principle in identifying rationale for new regulations.
 4 We oppose the concept of “mission creep” whereby any agency extends its authority
 5 beyond the original intent of rules and regulation.
 6 We support the actions being undertaken by state government to initiate broad
 7 regulatory reform through the establishment of guidance, standards and principles for the

8 adoption and administration of regulations. We believe that this process needs to
9 incorporate the following principles:

- 10 1. Recognition of property rights as the foundation for resource production;
- 11 2. The regulations are based upon sound scientific data which has been subject to
12 replication and peer review;
- 13 3. A risk assessment analysis should be conducted prior to the promulgation of a
14 regulation;
- 15 4. An estimate of the costs and benefits associated with public and private sector
16 compliance with the regulation must be conducted prior to promulgation of the
17 regulations;
- 18 5. Regulations should allow for flexibility of rules and regulations to fit varying
19 local conditions;
- 20 6. The regulations have been subject to independent analysis and public scrutiny;
- 21 7. Alternatives to regulation have been considered, especially the provision of
22 market-based incentives;
- 23 8. The regulations respect the practicalities of doing business in the industry being
24 regulated;
- 25 9. The presumption of innocence as opposed to the current presumption of guilt
26 should be strengthened;
- 27 10. The adoption of tools that measure the cumulative impact of regulations affecting
28 production agriculture and believe this measurement should be completed prior to
29 the implementation of any regulation impacting agriculture; and
- 30 11. Maintain a centralized electronic system for regulatory notification (“e-
31 notification system”) that enables interested persons to receive notices from state
32 agencies concerning development and drafting of rules, summaries of rule
33 evaluation reports, and notification of meetings regarding agency regulatory
34 processes.

35 We support limiting the ability to intervene in regulatory actions against landowners
36 for environmental problems to adjoining landowners, neighbors, or those directly affected
37 by the alleged violation.

38 We encourage more efficient and expeditious decisions regarding mandatory
39 government permit requests to encourage growth of new and existing business entities.

40 We encourage review of Ohio EPA programs that may be better implemented by
41 ODA.

TAXES

State and Local Taxes in General

481

1 Taxpayers’ money should be efficiently used. To stay within the state budget, we
2 strongly encourage our state legislators to make every effort to find cost savings
3 measures before raising taxes.

4 We believe that revenue to the state should be received through the following
5 continuum of taxation from most palatable to least palatable:

- 6 1. the income tax;
- 7 2. the state sales tax;
- 8 3. the Commercial Activity Tax (CAT);

9 4. property taxes.

10 The state should streamline tax collection, including municipal income taxes. We
11 support legislation that will benefit members living in unincorporated areas but who are
12 impacted by municipal income taxes.

13 When a government agency promulgates restrictions, we support the establishment of
14 a tax relief and/or easement program that would provide income to landowners while
15 allowing state agencies to implement preservation policies.

16 We support legislation to permit local governments to levy an admission tax on
17 special events to pay for expenses of controlling and policing such events.

18 We encourage both state and national tax exemption on interest income from savings
19 accounts and investments.

20 We support exempting capital gains from Ohio taxable income as long as the real
21 property is held for more than five years.

22 We oppose any excessive and unfair taxes.

23 We oppose all state voter referendums that propose bond issues, unless the
24 referendum includes the source of revenue needed to pay off the bond (principle and
25 interest).

26 Income received from fees and assessments from an agency or program shall not be
27 returned to general purpose or general revenue funds.

28 Taxes on intrastate transmission lines should be taxed at the same rate as distribution
29 lines. Interstate transmission lines should continue to be taxed at the higher rate.

Property Taxes

482

1 We favor maintaining the 10 percent and 2-1/2 percent property tax rollback for
2 existing and renewal levies. We support reinstating the 10 percent and 2-1/2 percent
3 property tax rollback for new and replacement levies.

4 We support the rate adjustment factor, and the 10 mill limitation on inside millage.

5 We oppose any additional obligation (except in voter approved rate increases) on real
6 property taxes to fund local or any other level of government, including schools.

7 Real property tax reappraisals and triennial updates should be done in a manner that
8 accurately reflects the true value of home sites, buildings, and land. We support
9 legislation that would change the meaning of the county auditors' definition "true market
10 value" or "market value." These terms should mean the current purchase price of the
11 land, even if it is sold by auction. We encourage Farm Bureau members to review their
12 tax bills and property tax cards to determine the accuracy of the assigned value.

13 We support the restructuring of the County Board of Revision to include nonpolitical
14 members with the appropriate qualifications so that there is an independent review of the
15 auditor's evaluations.

16 We support property tax relief for landowners who use best management practices
17 along waterways.

18 We support non-permanent agricultural structures being treated as personal property
19 and not taxed as real property.

CAUV**483**

1 We encourage OFBF to help protect CAUV in Ohio and to promote the integrity of
2 the program by supporting the enforcement of its standards.

3 We support the same CAUV law interpretation in all counties.

4 We encourage education and training of county auditor employees implementing the
5 CAUV program.

6 We support changing the CAUV sign-up period to once every five years to coincide
7 with the Agricultural District sign-up period.

8
9 *CAUV Qualifications*

10 We support maintaining the minimum acreage requirement to qualify for CAUV at 10
11 acres, or a minimum of \$2,500 gross agricultural income.

12 We encourage the inclusion of equine and equine activities as a qualifying use for the
13 CAUV program.

14 We support allowing all lands enrolled in a federal conservation program to qualify
15 for CAUV.

16 We support allowing up to 25percent of a farm to be used for conservation practices
17 (such as buffer strips, filter strips, grass waterways, permanent covercrops and wetlands)
18 without losing CAUV status.

19 We continue to support that the land under permanent farm markets and greenhouses
20 be eligible for CAUV. Eligibility should require at least 50 percent owner-produced
21 commodities. This eligibility would be consistent with land under other agricultural
22 structures.

23 We should eliminate the state's forestry tax and combine it with CAUV. CAUV
24 would then apply to forestland.

25 We support legislation that would require woodlands to have a simple forest
26 management plan to qualify for CAUV. The plans need to be written by a state, SWCD,
27 or private lands forester. We would oppose any requirement that a "master logger"
28 harvest timber as it applies to the CAUV program.

29 Tracts, lots or parcels of land where the title is held by one owner and which are
30 farmed as one farming unit should be allowed to be combined to qualify for CAUV, even
31 if the tracts, lots or parcels are located in different counties. The auditor in the county
32 where the majority of the land is located shall determine the eligibility of the land in the
33 neighboring county. The tax revenue generated by each individual parcel shall still go to
34 the county where the individual parcel is located.

35 Some non-profit groups and organizations [501(c)(3)] maintain land or other property
36 that are used only for investment or money raising. If such properties are not a part of
37 their primary mission and location, we support legislation requiring them to pay property
38 taxes on those holdings.

39 We support time limitations for hearings and decisions by the Board of Revisions
40 regarding CAUV qualifications to allow the appeal process to take place in a more timely
41 manner.

42
43 *CAUV Calculation*

44 We support the present CAUV formula.

45 We encourage that the CAUV formula be thoroughly reviewed to ensure that data
46 used in the calculation is recent, relevant, and reflective of Ohio's agricultural economy.

47 Efforts should be made to reduce volatility in valuation.

48 OFBF should investigate the use of regional cropping patterns, and the inclusion of
49 forage or pasture in the CAUV calculation to better address the variation of agriculture
50 across the state of Ohio.

51 We encourage that a study be done to more accurately reflect woodland values in
52 CAUV.

53 We encourage that a study be done to determine whether the capitalization rate used
54 in the CAUV formula is accurate.

55 We oppose including the value of government payments or subsidies to be used in the
56 calculation of CAUV.

57

58 *CAUV Recoupment*

59 We support legislation giving counties the permissive authority to increase CAUV
60 recoupment to five years, with the last two years of recoupment to fund local voluntary
61 farmland preservation programs.

62 We support refraining from charging CAUV recoupment during the installation and
63 development of energy exploration, generation and or transmission projects until the
64 project is established and an accurate accounting of land taken out of agricultural
65 production is determined.

66 We support extending the time a farm can lie fallow before recoupment takes place if
67 the farm is unable to be farmed for reasons such as, health of the farmer, size of the farm,
68 quality of the soil, etc., as long as the farm is not sold, transferred or otherwise developed
69 in that time.

Public Property

484

1 We urge that state or federal tax exempt agencies be required to pay real property tax
2 on properties from which income is being derived.

3 In order to compensate local governmental units, including school districts, for
4 revenue loss due to publicly owned land and facilities, we urge the State of Ohio to
5 consider establishing user fees, admissions, tuition, licensing, etc., to reimburse these
6 local units.

7 We support legislation that requires the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to pay
8 taxes on all land and real estate owned by the department for recreational or
9 environmental purposes. These taxes should be paid to local governmental subdivisions
10 and school districts at the same rate and value as paid by private property owners.

Income Tax

485

1 We encourage our lawmakers to consider a "fair tax" law that makes taxes equitable
2 among all levels of income. Additional revenue, if needed, should come primarily from
3 the personal income tax and, under some circumstances, from an increase in sales and use
4 tax rates, rather than from eliminating exemptions.

5 We support use of the optional local school district income tax in preference to
6 property tax.

7 We support legislation to eliminate the requirement of quarterly filing for city income
8 taxes for those reporting agricultural incomes.

9 We support and encourage a change in state tax laws that will eliminate the penalty
10 for couples filing joint tax returns.

11 If land is taken by eminent domain, we support legislation that would create a state
12 income tax credit for all capital gains taxes.

13 We encourage the state legislature to increase the dollar amount for accelerated
14 depreciation for businesses and farms to match the federal tax regulations.

15 We support state income tax incentives for donated conservation and agricultural
16 easements.

Sales Tax

486

1 We support the continuation of the agricultural sales tax exemption.

2 We oppose taxes on food at the wholesale or retail levels.

3 We support the use of a statewide sales tax and/or income tax to fund education in
4 place of increases in real property tax.

5 We support the replacement of property taxes with the revenue from additional
6 statewide sales tax, thus creating a reduction in property tax.

7 We support the concept of an Internet sales tax; however current Ohio sales tax
8 exemptions should apply.

9 We support requiring that all state agencies accept “postmarked by” instead of
10 “received by” for paperwork filings.

11 We support legislation that uses the common definition of agriculture for determining
12 the sales tax exemption for all-purpose off-highway vehicles.

Tax Abatements, Credits, Incentives

487

1 We encourage the State of Ohio to conduct a study to determine if tax abatements
2 actually pay for themselves and are a valid way to encourage business growth.

3 When tax abatements are granted for industry, there should be guidelines that require
4 the new industry to meet certain standards. We encourage tax abatements for business
5 locating on an abandoned site, rather than on prime farmland. If businesses given tax
6 abatements leave before, or immediately at the end of an abatement period, they should
7 pay a tax recoupment penalty of a high percentage of their years of agreement. We
8 support a provision in state law authorizing recoupment as part of any incentive, credit, or
9 abatement and encourage local government officials to include that provision in any
10 agreements. We also support reimbursement or payment in lieu of taxes to schools and
11 other local governments.

12 County commissioners should continue to have the opportunity to review all
13 requested property tax abatements.

14 OFBF should work with Buy Ohio to initiate tax incentives for Ohio businesses that
15 purchase Ohio agricultural commodities to produce their end-use products. These
16 incentives would encourage agri-business to locate in Ohio and to limit their commodity
17 purchases to “Ohio grown”. This program would also provide the business with a
18 “locally grown” marketing opportunity.

Motor Fuels Tax 488

- 1 We support a tax credit for the end-users of renewable fuels.
 2 Ohio should reevaluate the methods utilized to fund road safety and maintenance.
 3 Gas taxes may no longer be the only answer due to new technology used to fuel cars.
 4 Any discussion should ensure equity for agricultural usage.

Motor Vehicle License and Highway Use Tax 489

- 1 We oppose the removal of front license plates on motor vehicles.
 2 We urge the State of Ohio to enforce and assure compliance with the current system
 3 of individual auto liability insurance coverage. The Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles
 4 should be required to notify an individual if his/her driver's license is suspended. We
 5 support increasing the property damage and bodily injury state minimum insurance levels
 6 for mandatory auto liability insurance. Current levels are too low to cover accident
 7 expenses in many cases according to today's costs.
 8 We urge that the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles require that the county name be
 9 displayed at the bottom of both front and rear license plates.
 10 Wagons subject to slow moving vehicle regulation should continue to be exempt from
 11 licensing fees.
 12 Currently, vehicle license tags cannot be transferred at the end of a lease contract
 13 when the lessee purchases the vehicle. This can result in virtual double taxation for the
 14 same owner/operator. A simple fee for transferring the license from the lease company to
 15 the owner should be available.
 16 We oppose the use of fuel and highway use taxes for any purpose other than highway
 17 construction and repair.
 18 We oppose the titling and licensing of farm machinery.
 19 When additional state highway funds are available through an increase in the motor
 20 fuel tax, an adequate portion of that tax should be allocated for rural roads and bridges.
 21 We urge that the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles put the word "farm" back on farm
 22 plated vehicles.
 23 We support the license plates that promote agriculture, Ohio's number one industry.
 24 We encourage the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles to allow the option of renewing
 25 commercial vehicle and farm truck registrations via U.S. mail and/or the internet.
 26 We support a farm truck that uses a six month license to be exempt from financial
 27 responsibility (insurance) during the off season.

Severance Tax on Oil and Gas 490

- 1 The regulatory costs related to drilling should be funded through drilling permits and
 2 the severance tax.
 3 We oppose an increase in the severance tax solely to fund an income tax reduction. If
 4 there is an increase in the severance tax revenue generated should be organized along the
 5 following priorities:
 6 1. Support for ODNR Oil and Gas regulatory and enforcement programs.
 7 2. Support for enhancement in the Ohio Orphan Well Program.
 8 3. Support for programs addressing planning, local infrastructure, economic and
 9 community development in the areas/counties impacted by drilling and pipeline
 10 placement.

- 11 4. Support for reduction of income tax.
- 12 Any proposal that provides tax credits in relation to severance tax payments should
- 13 proportionally benefit producers and landowners with royalty interests.

Commercial Activity Tax **491**

1 We oppose any rate increases in the current Commercial Activity Tax (CAT), as well
 2 as any increases in the administrative fee. We recommend that the current CAT
 3 exemption threshold of \$150,000 be raised to \$500,000. We support exempting all farms
 4 from the CAT that are required to pay the Ohio Income Tax.

5 We believe in fiscal responsibility in state government. We support the reinstatement
 6 of the provision in law that if the CAT generates revenue beyond original estimates, half
 7 of the excess funds would be placed into a rainy day fund and half applied to an overall
 8 rate reduction.

9 We support the option of filing CAT returns by paper file.

Estate Taxes and Estate Administration **492**

1 We oppose any effort to reinstate a State of Ohio estate tax.

2 With respect to the probate administration of an estate, we support the increase of the
 3 threshold to relieve an estate from full probate administration to \$70,000 for non-spouse
 4 and up to \$500,000 where the surviving spouse inherits all of the assets of the estate.

SECTION 5: ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

SECTION 5: ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Environmental Protection

501

1 We will cooperate with sound programs that will lead to an improved environment.
 2 We insist environmental regulations be scientifically sound, based on credible data,
 3 practical, realistic, and economically feasible. We will support farmers who use sound
 4 management practices in their farming operations and face harassment or legal action by
 5 their neighbors or government agencies. We support those environmental laws that
 6 embrace these principles.

7 We believe after an investment has been made in pollution abatement equipment and
 8 facilities, and these have been approved, state and federal regulatory agencies should not
 9 require changes in such facilities due to changing or new technology as long as the
 10 current system operates as designed and meets environmental objectives.

11 We believe that any liability resulting from failure of facilities due to poor
 12 design/engineering, planning or assessment should not be the responsibility of the
 13 landowner and such failure should be repaired by the responsible engineering or
 14 government agency.

15 We support both federal and state programs to provide grants to farmers of up to 75
 16 percent cost-sharing plus tax incentives to farmers installing pollution abatement
 17 facilities.

18 We urge farmers to abide by Ohio's hazardous waste law. Information and
 19 opportunity should be provided to farmers so they can properly deal with agricultural
 20 hazardous waste.

21 We support the development of agricultural expertise within the Ohio EPA through
 22 the hiring of individuals with agricultural experience.

23 We urge farmers to remove underground fuel storage tanks. Encourage farmers to
 24 site, manage, and inspect aboveground fuel storage tanks on a routine and regular basis.

25 We recommend establishment of a new, more reasonable fire code category for above
 26 ground, private fueling sites with a combined tankage of 5,000 gallons or less.

27 Consideration should be given to proper venting, labeling and distances from
 28 important structures.

29 We commend the Ohio EPA for developing its Voluntary Action Program (VAP)
 30 which allows individuals or businesses to voluntarily clean up contaminated properties so
 31 they can continue in, or be put into, productive use. We strongly urge the Ohio EPA to
 32 reduce the severity of the regulations that must be met to the bare minimum in order to
 33 encourage redevelopment on existing sites. We further recommend the use of peer
 34 review, based upon sound science, to confirm non-excessive clean up requirements.

35 We support member participation in programs utilizing voluntary, science-based,
 36 confidential self-assessment tools such as the Livestock Environmental Assurance
 37 Program (LEAP) and the Equine Environmental and Liability Assurance Program.

38 We encourage continued research and the use of sound conservation practices
 39 designed to minimize the offsite transport of nutrients.

40 We believe Ohio environmental regulations should not be more stringent than federal
 41 regulations.

42 We support the farmers' right to apply nutrients as long as they follow state approved
 43 guidelines including Natural Resources Conservation Service Standard #590 or a similar
 44 standard.

45 We support the development of a law to address chronic and frivolous complaints
 46 against agricultural operations.

47 We urge that members of Ohio's congressional delegation and the Governor work to
 48 ensure that NPDES delegation authority for large livestock farms is transferred from the
 49 Ohio EPA to the Ohio Department of Agriculture.

50 We support the Ohio EPA in addressing education of their permitting process,
 51 especially in the case of their asbestos abatement permit, before a violation happens.

AIR

E-check 511

1 We support elimination of the enhanced motor vehicle inspection and maintenance
 2 (E-check) program. Efforts to meet U.S. EPA air quality standards should emphasize
 3 state flexibility and control.

Acid Rain 512

1 We will work toward a reduction of undesirable products of combustion with
 2 necessary regard to economic impacts. Fuel substitution is not a permanent viable fix
 3 and could be fatal to Ohio's coal industry. We support the efforts of the Office of Coal
 4 Development, Ohio Department of Development, and the industry to commercialize the
 5 proven clean coal technology. There should be more time given for the utility industry to
 6 update generating facilities to comply with the Clean Air Act, utilizing clean coal
 7 technology.

8 The cost of compliance with the Clean Air Act should be broader based. The law
 9 should:

- 10 1. Extend these costs to all the country;
- 11 2. Reduce requirements for sulfur dioxide emissions to more reasonable levels until
 12 the benefits of reduction are more adequately documented; and
- 13 3. Grandfather older power plants and establish the more stringent requirements for
 14 new construction.

15 We support the appropriation of more research money or provision of tax incentives
 16 for safe and clean use of high sulfur coal.

Clean Air 513

1 The balanced implementation of the Federal Clean Air Act is important to the farmers
 2 of Ohio.

3 Any state regulations developed to implement the Federal Clean Air Act and other air
 4 quality laws should be scientifically sound, based on credible data, practical, realistic and
 5 economically feasible. Regulatory action should wait for the development of proven
 6 emission measurement technology.

7 Sufficient scientifically based representative field data regarding air quality and
 8 agricultural operations does not currently exist. We support funding for, and voluntary
 9 agreements that lead to agricultural air quality research.

Open Burning **514**

1 We support the expansion of the current open burning regulations to allow for the
2 disposal of storm damage debris and flood related drift wood during otherwise restricted
3 dates and times and oppose any effort to restrict agricultural open burning.

4 The Ohio Department of Agriculture's accepted practice for controlling the spread of
5 diseased pests, bacteria and fungi is by burning the diseased material. If such burning is
6 necessary, we support the Ohio Department of Agriculture be the sole entity that issues a
7 permit for such activity.

Outdoor Wood Fired Boilers **515**

1 Outdoor wood fired boilers installed according to manufacturer's recommendations
2 and applicable state and local codes should be grandfathered and exempted from any new
3 requirements established for new installations. We are opposed to new state regulations
4 pertaining to outdoor wood fired boilers and any rule making should be postponed to
5 allow enough time for the existing federal voluntary program to succeed.

LAND

Bio-Solids **521**

1 We support cooperation among applicators, Ohio Environmental Protection Agency,
2 municipalities and Soil and Water Conservation Districts to assure proper and safe
3 application of bio-solids.

4 The same nutrient levels that apply in the application of agricultural nutrients to
5 farmland should apply to bio-solid application. We encourage farmers to utilize Best
6 Management Practices for the application and use of bio-solids, which includes obtaining
7 a complete chemical analysis performed by a qualified laboratory, of the bio-solids being
8 applied, including, but not limited to heavy metals, organics, and pathogens.

9 Bio-solid generators must be held accountable for damages occurring from inaccurate
10 chemical analysis of heavy metals, dioxins, or other toxins. Damages resulting from
11 misapplication are the responsibility of the applicator.

12 We urge the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and OARDC to conduct research
13 on efficient land application of bio-solids to strip-mine reclamation projects to avoid
14 polluting our soil and water. We are against the indiscriminate spreading of bio-solids on
15 any land. All bio-solids used on land should continue to be sampled and analyzed for
16 metals, organics, and pathogens by a qualified laboratory.

Hazardous and Solid Waste Disposal **522**

1 We support legislation to remove the veto power vested in the legislative authority of
2 the largest municipality of each county within a solid waste management district.
3 Ratification of the solid waste management plan, as prepared by the solid waste policy
4 committee, would be solely and strictly contingent upon determining that a sufficient
5 number of legislative authorities have approved the plan.

6 We need to continue our present flow control regulations on landfills, thus allowing
7 local authorities to set rates that are affordable.

8 The location of solid waste and hazardous waste facility sites should adequately
9 protect groundwater.

10 We encourage the Ohio Legislature to enact laws strengthening Ohio's landfill laws
11 to better protect Ohio's rural environment.

12 We recommend the establishment of regional recycling centers financed by all the
13 units of government in that region.

14 We support efforts aimed at reclaiming and recycling solid and hazardous wastes
15 through energy generators, waste exchangers, and other types of energy conversion.

16 We encourage the use of agriculturally based biodegradable packaging products.

17 We urge proper enforcement of present regulations concerning the transportation and
18 handling of hazardous material to ensure proper response in event of accidents.

19 Whenever possible, hazardous waste should be neutralized at the site of production
20 before being transported.

21 We encourage farmers to strictly follow all recommended methods of disposal of all
22 agricultural chemical containers.

23 We request a full time inspector at all waste facilities during business hours.

24 A special fund should be established to provide for clean-up of hazardous waste
25 dumping when the violator is not known and the landowner has no control or
26 responsibility for the illegal dumping.

27 We encourage the further development and expansion of compost technologies for
28 household and yard wastes.

29 We support the continuation of the state-wide moratorium on construction debris and
30 demolition (CD&D) landfills until adequate rules and regulations are in place to protect
31 the environment. Loads going into and out of transfer stations must remain identifiable.

Household Sewage Treatment

523

1 To protect the quality of our water resources and the health of rural residents, we:

- 2 1. Believe it is the responsibility of rural homeowners to ensure that their home
3 sewage treatment systems are managed and operated correctly and encourage
4 them to follow a routine and regular inspection program;
- 5 2. Urge rural homeowners to work with their local board of health to address any
6 identified needs associated with the proper operation and maintenance of their
7 home sewage treatment system;
- 8 3. Encourage alternative funding mechanisms, including but not limited to cost
9 sharing, low interest loans and tax-credits, be made available to rural homeowners
10 to upgrade, repair or replace existing nonfunctional or outdated home sewage
11 treatment systems;
- 12 4. Believe that individuals who are trained in soil analysis, such as Soil and Water
13 Conservation District (SWCD) and Natural Resources Conservation Service
14 (NRCS), should have the authority to identify the soil types that will not be
15 appropriate for traditional home sewage treatment systems;
- 16 5. Support providing the Director of Health and the local boards of health the
17 authority to assign a level of risk (low, moderate, high) to each site based on lot
18 size and soil conditions. The assigned level of risk is to determine the appropriate
19 sewage treatment system(s) for the site.

- 20 6. Support the installation of nontraditional home sewage treatment systems when
21 site conditions are not appropriate for traditional systems;
- 22 7. Support a uniform inspection standard that is fair to all homeowners that utilize a
23 home sewage treatment system;
- 24 8. Support the proper and safe disposal of septage; and
- 25 9. Homeowners should not be required to abandon their private sewage treatment
26 system and connect to a public sewage system when it becomes accessible to the
27 property, if the private sewage system is inspected and approved by a qualified
28 inspector.

Waste Disposal and Recycling

524

- 1 We support a comprehensive litter and solid waste control law that includes, but is
2 not limited to the following provisions:
- 3 1. A deposit on beverage cans and bottles. This deposit should be high enough to
4 provide an incentive for their return;
- 5 2. Adequate redemption and recycling opportunities for rural areas;
- 6 3. An incentive for manufacturers selling in Ohio to easily make recyclable
7 products;
- 8 4. Incentives for private industry to collect and recycle recyclable materials;
- 9 5. A financial incentive for local non-profit groups to pick up litter along highways
10 outside of incorporated areas;
- 11 6. An incentive to develop and use biodegradable packaging and trash bags; and
12 7. Research into using recycled tires.
- 13 Should waste of any type be deposited on a landowner's property unknown to the
14 landowner, its removal and disposal should become the responsibility of the county litter
15 agency, or other appropriate agency.
- 16 We urge the Ohio EPA Division of Materials and Waste Management to continue to
17 control litter and solid waste in rural areas.
- 18 Litter prevention and recycling education should be a part of Ohio's effort in
19 controlling solid waste.
- 20 We urge the continued research and development of economically feasible
21 composting programs that benefit the urban community and agriculture. This should
22 include, but not be limited to:
- 23 1. What products can be composted;
- 24 2. The nutrient value of compost; and
- 25 3. The economic value of composting.
- 26 We encourage utilization of composting on agricultural operations and promote
27 enhanced access to cost share funds for implementation and operation of composting
28 facilities.
- 29 We encourage local units of government to investigate and establish centralized
30 collection points for household hazardous waste, unused and outdated prescription or
31 over the counter drugs and items to be recycled.
- 32 We support an increase in the agricultural exemption for tires on the storage
33 regulations that apply to feed storage (silo bunkers). The tires used for this purpose
34 should be cut in half so as not to retain water.

- 35 We support a civil remedy against dealers in scrap metal who purchase metals under
 36 circumstances where the purchaser knows, or should know, that the metal is stolen.
 37 We encourage agricultural plastic recycling programs to keep plastic out of landfills.

WATER

Nonpoint Source Pollution

531

1 The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Soil and Water Conservation
 2 Districts, and Ohio State University Extension are developing various programs to reduce
 3 soil loss and nonpoint source pollution from agriculture run-off and from disposal of
 4 agricultural wastes. In order for these programs and any associated funding to be the
 5 most effective environmentally and economically, they need to be directed to
 6 conservation projects that have a higher potential for reducing the off-site transport of
 7 nutrients. We support these programs and encourage the state to provide adequate funds
 8 for agriculture pollution abatement. We will also work with these agencies, and others
 9 involved to develop waste management and handling guidelines in order to protect
 10 farmers and processors from unreasonable and/or inconsistent regulations.

11 We recognize that Ohio's water resources are valuable to the State of Ohio and as
 12 such, we expect farmers to use environmental management systems to protect and
 13 improve water quality (such as but not limited to filter strips, grass waterways, wetlands
 14 and cover crops).

15 Monies made available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S.
 16 Environmental Protection Agency, and the general revenue fund of Ohio should be
 17 promptly passed through and applied to the implementation of soil and water
 18 conservation efforts on the land. This action has proven to be the most effective method
 19 of reducing the phosphorus loading in Lake Erie and the reduction of agriculture
 20 pollution of streams and rivers, as well as reducing costs of sediment removal in
 21 agriculture areas. We support state government contribution to, and further expansion of
 22 federal cost share programs.

23 We believe that whenever possible, all individuals disturbing the land surface should
 24 follow recommendations set by the Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment
 25 Control (CPESC Program), Soil and Water Conservation Districts and local NRCS soil
 26 technicians.

27 We encourage all those (including non-agricultural) applying nutrients and crop
 28 protectant products to follow recognized management practices including the
 29 development of nutrient management plans with soil testing.

30 We promote urban conservation practices that minimize nutrient and pesticide runoff,
 31 including stream buffers, rain gardens and other infiltration management practices, soil
 32 testing and proper fertilization and pesticide application rates.

Watershed Management

532

- 1 As responsible stewards of our land, water and air resources, we:
- 2 1. Support efforts of the OFBF water quality initiative, the OFBF Strategic Vision
 - 3 for Water Quality and Healthy Water Ohio;
 - 4 2. Support member participation in established local watershed groups;
 - 5 3. Encourage members to assess and evaluate their local water resources;

- 6 4. Encourage members to lead in the formation of local watershed groups;
- 7 5. Support adequate funding of local watershed groups for the development and
- 8 implementation of watershed management plans;
- 9 6. Encourage local political jurisdictions to partner in the development and
- 10 implementation of watershed management plans;
- 11 7. Support and encourage member involvement in the local implementation of state
- 12 water quality initiatives such as the Source Water Assessment and Protection
- 13 (SWAP) Program and Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Program;
- 14 8. Support the use of scientifically based and economically sound conservation
- 15 practices to protect surface and ground water resources that are delivered in a
- 16 flexible and voluntary manner;
- 17 9. Support the watershed specialists in the Ohio Department of Natural Resources
- 18 and the Ohio State University Extension in the implementation of the Watershed
- 19 Action Agenda;
- 20 10. Support a state income tax credit for water quality improvement projects; and
- 21 11. Support monitoring the licensing and enforcement of Ohio public water systems
- 22 for agricultural, horticultural and related operations and assisting affected
- 23 members with compliance.

Conservation and Market-Based Incentives

533

1 Improving the environment by enhancing the conservation, wise use and productivity
 2 of our natural resources through private ownership, individual freedom and market-
 3 oriented approaches is our most important conservation and environmental goal.

4 We believe:

- 5 1. Pollution permit trading is a viable approach to implement the requirements of the
- 6 Federal Clean Water Act and Federal Clean Air Act.
- 7 2. The United States Environmental Protection Agency should outline the general
- 8 guidelines of pollution permit trading but allow local entities to determine the
- 9 management system which best fits its needs.
- 10 3. Water quality credits traded between farmers and point source polluters should be
- 11 conducted locally prior to offering the credits on a regional or multi-state basis.

12 We support:

- 13 1. Compensation at fair market value for environmental or regulatory costs that
- 14 contribute to the public good.
- 15 2. The development, promotion and education of farmers about market-based
- 16 incentive programs, such as nutrient and carbon credit trading as alternatives to
- 17 government prescriptions.

Nutrient Management

534

1 We support an education program on nutrient management that includes fertilizer
 2 applicator certification and should consider the following components:

- 3 1. be part of a comprehensive nutrient loss reduction strategy addressing all
- 4 sources of nutrients;
- 5 2. provide adequate funding for research, education and outreach;
- 6 3. provide adequate resources for the development, administration and
- 7 implementation of the certification program;

- 8 4. be economically feasible for farmers;
- 9 5. be reasonable, not unduly burdensome to production agriculture;
- 10 6. have a foundation based on sound research and field data that will result in
- 11 meaningful off-site nutrient reduction;
- 12 7. be technology driven; and
- 13 8. provide clarity regarding the criteria for suspension of a certification.

14 We expect all farm operations applying commercial fertilizer or manure, regardless of
15 size, to complete fertilizer applicator certification and develop and follow a science based
16 nutrient management plan.

17 We support a safe harbor for farmers who follow industry accepted practices for
18 nutrient management.

19 We support requiring a custom manure license issued by the Ohio Department of
20 Agriculture (ODA) for custom application of manure. The custom applicator should
21 assume all responsibility in regard to correct transportation and application of the
22 manure.

23 Nutrients derived from plant waste and animal manure have value, and as such should
24 be recognized as a commodity.

25 We support continued research on nutrient management and water quality and
26 recommend farmers, homeowners, municipalities, and businesses follow the International
27 Fertilizer Institute 4R Nutrient Stewardship principles – Right source, Right rate, Right
28 time and Right place.

29 We support the Department of Agriculture’s Livestock Environmental Permitting
30 Program to adopt reasonable, economically viable, scientifically based rules related to its
31 certified livestock manager (CLM) program. This would include, but not be limited to,
32 requiring a chain of responsibility regarding correct transportation, application and
33 monitoring of nutrients from livestock facilities.

34 We support an amendment to Ohio’s Public Records Law that would prevent the
35 release of proprietary or confidential information collected by any state or local agency
36 related to the development and implementation of management plans.

37 We support consolidation of government nutrient management authority if the action:

- 38 1. Provides appropriate regulatory authority to manage violations with timely
- 39 and fair enforcement.
- 40 2. Creates efficiencies, cost savings and reduces duplication.
- 41 3. Creates certainty to farmers in regards to regulatory authority.
- 42 4. Continues and improves compliance assistance to farmers.
- 43 5. Provides appropriate resources to implement.
- 44 6. Results in environmental improvement.

Watercourse Differentiation

535

1 We encourage the adoption of definitions to differentiate the types of watercourses
2 found in a watershed based on the following concepts.

- 3 1. Ohio Environmental Protection Agency should designate water courses based on
- 4 their numerical scores (ICI), fish (IBI) and habitat (QHEI) at the time of testing
- 5 and not on a perceived improvement potential.

- 6 2. Due to confusion caused by labeling all watercourses as streams, we believe
7 definitions should be adopted to differentiate the types of watercourses found in a
8 watershed. Some examples are the following:
9 a. Watercourse-Any concentrated flow of water.
10 b. Stream-A watercourse that existed historically and has a steady flow of water.
11 c. Modified Stream-A watercourse that existed historically, has a steady flow of
12 water but has been altered by man at some time in the past to better serve
13 other uses.
14 d. Channel-A watercourse that existed historically and has periods of
15 intermittent or no water flow.
16 e. Modified Channel - A watercourse that existed historically, has periods of
17 intermittent or no water flow, but has been altered by man at some time in the
18 past to better serve other uses.
19 f. Man-Made Channel-A watercourse that did not exist historically and has
20 periods of intermittent or no water flow (also known as a Ditch).Maintained
21 Man-Made Channel-A watercourse that did not exist historically, has periods
22 of intermittent or no water flow and is maintained under an authorized
23 government program.
- 24 3. The “LRW or limited resource water” designation used by the Ohio
25 Environmental Protection Agency has a three (3) square mile or less drainage area
26 requirement, which should be removed. Many man-made and maintained man-
27 made channels have drainage areas over (3) square miles with intermittent or no
28 flow periods, but are given designations higher than LRW because of drainage
29 area.
- 30 4. IBI (fish) and ICI (bug) scores should not apply to watercourses with intermittent
31 or no water flow.

32 We support a new use designation by Ohio EPA for agricultural drainage ditches that
33 protects their use and maintenance for removal of excess water. They should not be
34 assigned recreational uses.

Stormwater District

536

1 We support legislation allowing the formation of Stormwater Districts under the
2 jurisdiction of Soil and Water Conservation Districts to solve drainage problems in areas
3 where the ditch law is not effective. Such a law should permit:

- 4 1. County commissioners, municipalities or township trustees to initiate action to
5 establish such a district;
6 2. District board control of stormwater management;
7 3. District taxing authority;
8 4. Collection of user fees;
9 5. Protection of agriculture from unfair assessment;
10 6. Districts to follow watershed boundaries not political boundaries; and
11 7. Fees and assessments collected shall be commensurate with services provided.

12 Adequate credit shall be given for absorption capacity and water management
13 practices on agricultural lands when Storm Water Phase II assessments are established.
14 Assessments should not be placed on a per area, per average impervious surface unit (e.g.

15 equivalent residential unit), or any other basis that would place an undue burden on
16 agriculture.

Water

537

1 Ohio's groundwater is a valuable resource. Ohio currently operates under a
2 reasonable use standard. Farm Bureau will continue to consider groundwater rights
3 legislation.

4 If the pumping or sale of groundwater by a public or private water company adversely
5 affects private water supplies, the company responsible should provide water by a tap-in
6 to a water line or a new well at no cost to the affected party.

7 We recognize the need of major metropolitan cities to obtain an adequate and safe
8 supply of water. We recommend that any and all studies of water supply alternatives
9 should present proposals which have the least negative impact on our natural resources,
10 and the least socio-economic impact on agriculture, especially the taking of prime
11 farmland. We believe governments should address:

- 12 1. Increasing their water conservation practices;
- 13 2. Water reuse and recycling potential;
- 14 3. Current water line losses;
- 15 4. Economics as a basis for water conservation (i.e., ascending block water rates);
- 16 5. The socio-economic impact on surrounding communities;
- 17 6. The right to use water as a property right which should not be taken from an
18 owner without due process of law and just compensation; and
- 19 7. Local community's right to use an organized regional water planning concept to
20 provide water for all communities in the region.

21 We support equal consideration and priority for rural and urban water use and the
22 continuation of monitoring the licensing and enforcement of Ohio public water systems
23 for agricultural operations and assisting affected members with compliance.

24 We believe the authority to monitor drinking water sources for pesticides and nitrates
25 belong with the Ohio Department of Agriculture.

26 We support the use of Best Management Practices (BMP) to reduce the potential
27 impact of pesticide and nutrient contamination of ground and surface water.

28 The disposal of wash water from produce grown and harvested following pesticide
29 label directions should not be regulated.

30 We encourage agricultural input in establishing preventative measures if pollution
31 levels exceed EPA standards, based on a rolling annual average.

32 We will oppose wellhead protection legislation that:

- 33 1. Requires private well owners to test for any contaminates other than Coliform
34 bacteria;
- 35 2. Regulates the use of pesticides or fertilizers on fields under cultivation; or
- 36 3. Charges farmers new fees for any purpose related to well head protection.

37 We are supportive of efforts to prevent contamination of surface and ground water
38 supplies from solid waste and hazardous waste landfills, leaking underground storage
39 tanks, salt brine disposal, or any other activities that may endanger the ground water
40 supply.

41 We support a well distance regulation on new housing which would force developers
42 to place wells at least 100 feet from property lines adjacent to agriculturally zoned land.

43 We support legislation that relieves farmers from liability for water contamination
 44 when approved farming methods are used and label directions are followed while using
 45 crop protection chemicals.

46 We support the education of surface users, urban and agricultural; to adequately
 47 protect ground water supplies.

48 We support funding of a Watershed Specialist under the supervision of the local Soil
 49 and Water Conservation Districts. We support funding for watershed assessment and
 50 monitoring to be conducted by the Soil and Water Conservation Districts. We support
 51 the efforts of the Water Resources Council.

52 We encourage the state to maintain their reservoirs, retain ownership and not turn
 53 them over to the local village or township.

54 We encourage farmers to begin recording water usage for all enterprises in order to be
 55 prepared for future legislation concerning provisional water rights to ground water.

Out-of-Basin Transfer of Water

538

1 Fresh water is increasingly being recognized as a valuable natural resource.
 2 Protecting Ohio's water basins from withdrawals to other regions of North America is
 3 necessary to maintain healthy ecosystems.

4 We believe:

- 5 1. Water used for food and fiber production and/or products is in the public interest,
 6 is a reasonable use of water and should not be considered a diversion;
- 7 2. Ohio agriculture maintains open spaces for aquifer recharge and preserves
 8 wildlife habitat; and
- 9 3. Regulation of agricultural water use is not necessary to protect, conserve, restore
 10 and improve the waters and water dependent natural resources of Ohio.

11 We support:

- 12 1. Efforts which will provide a high priority status to agricultural water use;
- 13 2. Research and education to increase the efficiency of agricultural water use; and
- 14 3. The development of a study of agricultural water use in Ohio and associated
 15 ecological benefits.

16 We oppose:

- 17 1. The expansion of Ohio's Water Withdrawal Facility Registration Program into a
 18 water use-permitting program;
- 19 2. Legislation that would adversely affect Ohio agriculture; and
- 20 3. The diversion of water in its natural state from one major river basin (two digit
 21 hydrological unit) in Ohio to another.

Wetlands

539

1 We support incentives for voluntary development of wetlands from private and public
 2 sources providing that the programs conform to national regulations.

3 We support incentives for the development of wetlands for the treatment of milk
 4 house waste and manure. We encourage the Ohio EPA to relax discharge standards from
 5 these wetlands. Such artificial wetlands should be counted as wetlands in wetland goals.

6 All wetland determinations should be made in the field by Natural Resources
 7 Conservation Service (NRCS) personnel or trained and certified technical service

8 providers under NRCS oversight in a timely manner so landowners can do land and
9 drainage improvements.

10 We encourage the proper design and management of wetlands to achieve a natural
11 balance and control of mosquitoes. We advocate research into the habitat and control of
12 those mosquito species carrying the West Nile Virus.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural Resources

541

1 Farmers have a major interest in the utilization and conservation of our natural
2 resources. It is primarily on farmland and in rural Ohio that the natural resource needs of
3 the state must be met.

4 We encourage our members to support and cooperate with the local Soil and Water
5 Conservation District in developing soil conservation, animal waste, water quality, air
6 quality, and composting plans that follow sound conservation management practices on
7 the farm.

8 We believe that all municipal water and sewer projects extending beyond city limits
9 should be publicly developed giving due consideration for alternatives with input from
10 affected landowners.

11 We support conservancy district authority to develop storm water management plans.
12 We continue to support the small watershed programs developed under P.L. 566.

13 A maintenance fund should be established and funded to provide the Ohio
14 Department of Natural Resources the funds necessary for maintenance on state-owned
15 land. The funds should come from existing ODNR revenues. Money from the fund
16 should also be used to indemnify adjoining landowners for damage caused by failure of
17 ODNR to maintain the state-owned land.

18 ODNR should be required to get legislative approval to purchase additional land.

19 We recommend that Ohio provide Soil and Water Conservation Districts with the
20 authority to supervise the reclamation of the land following the installation of water,
21 sewer, oil, and gas lines.

22 We believe that local, state and national forests and wildlife areas should be required
23 to properly identify and maintain all property lines and their share of fences, and, upon
24 request of adjoining landowners, cut back trees and brush. We encourage individual
25 private landowners to follow similar guidelines.

26 We recommend that the Ohio Department of Natural Resources be required to
27 develop land use plans evidencing responsible stewardship of the land under their
28 management, ownership or for future purchased land. These plans should include, for
29 example, identification of funds for development or maintenance of the land; a wildlife
30 management plan; and identification of noxious weed and mosquito controls.

31 We believe when declaring a piece of land a wetland appropriate compensation for
32 the landowner should be made either through tax forgiveness, purchase at the option of
33 the owner, payment for wildlife habitat, or other means acceptable to the landowner. We
34 support the use of income tax credit for enhancement or development of wetlands.

35 We oppose legislation to change the designation of any state forest to that of state
36 park. We support the use of Best Management Practices based on recommendations of
37 our state foresters, as opposed to recommendations proposed by an advisory council.

Oil and Gas**542**

1 We encourage all property owners to obtain appropriate information and legal advice
2 prior to entering into oil and gas leases.

3 We support legislation, which will require oil and gas companies that purchase oil
4 and gas to pay landowners directly for their share of oil and gas produced.

5 Landowners should not be charged for transportation of oil and gas through producer
6 owned lines.

7 We support drilling for oil and gas on public lands.

8 We support compensation for land owners without mineral rights that have collection
9 lines or other oil and gas collection infrastructure on their property.

10 Landowners should have access to producer owned gas meters. The landowner
11 should also have the right to check the orifice plate with the chart. To assist the
12 landowner in understanding the meter and the production through it, the producing
13 company should supply the landowner with a master list to assist in reading the chart.
14 We urge oil and gas producers to use readable meters that can be more easily understood
15 by royalty owners.

16 A system must be established creating uniform verification of quantities of oil,
17 natural gas and natural gas liquids reported as produced from wells in the State of Ohio.

18 System features should:

- 19 1. Identify and record quantities of oil, natural gas and natural gas liquids from each
20 well head on monthly and annual basis.
- 21 2. Employ units of measure specified in New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX)
22 commodity delivery contracts for each material produced.
- 23 3. Provide production figures at the wellhead in one, uniform format that
24 accommodate payment of federal, state and local government taxes.
- 25 4. Employ government inspection and reporting system ensuring accuracy of
26 metering/telemetry used to measure well production.

27 A system should be established requiring producers to provide lessor friendly royalty
28 payment reports. Reports should:

- 29 1. Identify and record quantities of oil, natural gas and natural gas liquids from each
30 well head on a monthly and annual basis.
- 31 2. Employ units of measure specified in New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX)
32 commodity delivery contracts for each material produced.
- 33 3. Identify specific contract delivery points where sale and lessor royalties are
34 determined.
- 35 4. Identify specific contract terms and conditions that establish delivery point sales
36 prices.
- 37 5. Identify metering/telemetry employed, processing fees, taxes and other deductions
38 subtracted from gross contract delivery point/sale prices to determine net
39 royalties.
- 40 6. Provide access to easily readable databases that can be used for audits
41 commissioned by lessors and appropriate government agencies.

42 An oil and gas metering inspection program should be established whereby an
43 independent, third party service provider can inspect all metering equipment and provide
44 landowner-friendly reports on the production of all wells in the drilling unit or pool.

45 We recommend that the law be changed for restoration of oil and gas well sites to
 46 permit the Chief of the Division of Oil and Gas Resources Management to promulgate
 47 rules that will provide for a sod cover, restore productive capacity, and prevent erosion
 48 around well sites and on access roads during the productive life of the well and after the
 49 well is plugged and abandoned. We urge the Division of Oil and Gas Resources
 50 Management to uniformly enforce plugging regulations. Local Soil and Water
 51 Conservation Districts should be given authority to approve the location of access roads
 52 and to supervise reclamation of well sites and access roads by approving a conservation
 53 plan for the area prior to a permit being issued. A portion of the permit fees should go
 54 back to the local Soil and Water Conservation District office.

55 The laws and regulations dealing with the unitizing of land areas on which oil and gas
 56 wells will be drilled need to be reviewed to make certain the landowner understands the
 57 unitizing plan before signing a lease. We further support limiting unitization to a surface
 58 area equivalent to the subsurface area from which oil and gas could be extracted. This
 59 would prevent land being pooled for the sole purpose of holding a land area for the
 60 producer without the delay rental being paid.

61 We support lease agreements that return to the landowner the acreage in a lease or
 62 provide delay rental for those drilling units or oil bearing formations that are not drilled
 63 or produced in an agreed time.

64 Oil and gas companies not owning land upon which wells are located should be
 65 required by law to furnish a cash bond to assure the payment for any damages to the
 66 farm.

67 Oil and gas producers should be required to maintain oil and gas well sites by
 68 mowing vegetation and painting equipment and tanks. All lines should be buried below
 69 the frost line.

70 We support requiring companies to cap non-productive, non-operating wells and
 71 forfeit the leasehold back to the landowner.

72 We support the county recorder's using only one assignment per instrument number
 73 for oil and gas leases.

74 We support legislation that gives the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division
 75 of Oil and Gas Resources Management the authority to enforce complaints concerning
 76 the care, maintenance and upkeep of gas well "feeder lines" and assist in capping
 77 orphaned oil or gas wells.

78 We urge the adoption of pipeline construction, repair and remediation standards
 79 recommended by the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts as the
 80 standard for land reclamation after construction.

81 We oppose the policy of oil and gas well permits being denied in townships where
 82 coal has been owned or leased but not mined.

83 We urge state rules whereby any landowner accommodating oil and gas infrastructure
 84 on their property with the purpose of extracting oil and gas from adjoining properties,
 85 should be compensated regardless of lease structure.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts

543

1 We strongly support Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) and their
 2 purpose of encouraging proper soil, water and other natural resource management and the
 3 promotion of economic and social development of the state. However, SWCDs must

- 4 undergo a transformation to ensure their long-term sustainability and adherence to this
 5 purpose. As part of this transformation, SWCDs should:
- 6 1. Define their core purpose and increase their emphasis on the conservation of soil,
 7 water and related resources;
 - 8 2. Establish the ability to direct SWCD programs and services on appropriate
 9 geographical boundaries to address the identified resource needs while retaining a
 10 program presence in each county;
 - 11 3. Develop a funding and program delivery model that provides the flexibility to
 12 adjust to changes in local and state financial support;
 - 13 4. Pursue increased collaboration and the sharing of services across all levels of
 14 government.

15 We encourage more farmer participation and involvement on SWCD boards.

Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers and Creeks

544

1 We urge the Department of Natural Resources to be very selective and to proceed
 2 very slowly in its program of designating additional wild, scenic and recreational rivers.
 3 Before any river is designated, the department should be in a position to enforce the
 4 trespassing laws on private property. The use of eminent domain for the purpose of
 5 gaining public access to such rivers and creeks should rarely be applied.

6 We urge farmers to volunteer to serve and to take an active part on scenic river
 7 advisory boards.

8 If the Ohio Department of Natural Resources is considering designating any stream as
 9 a scenic river, landowners along the stream should be notified by mail of this procedure.

10 We believe farmers have a right to remedy drainage problems along scenic rivers if
 11 the river adversely affects cropland.

MINERAL DEVELOPMENT

Longwall Mining

551

1 We support a longwall mining policy which:

- 2 1. Requires bonding to cover surface and sub-surface damages to structures and
 3 infrastructures;
- 4 2. Requires mining companies to take steps to keep all residences, agricultural
 5 buildings, land and equipment functional and structurally safe during and
 6 following mining;
- 7 3. Requires mining companies to return all land, buildings, and equipment to pre-
 8 mining conditions using a contractor of the landowner's choice;
- 9 4. Requires water restoration to pre-mining quantities and quality;
- 10 5. Adequately compensates landowners for inconvenience and lost use;
- 11 6. Provides state regulations or laws to have homes tested for radon, before
 12 underground mining as well as during and after mining;
- 13 7. Pays the landowner for those coal seams that the coal company does not own and
 14 that are destroyed by their mining operation; and
- 15 8. Opposes longwall mining under National Landmarks and property eligible for, or
 16 listed to, the National Register of Historic Places.

17 We support the Ohio EPA continuing to regulate slurry ponds at mining operations.

18 Any landowner with a producing oil or gas well shall be compensated for any and all
19 losses or damages incurred due to longwall mining. A plan shall be submitted to the
20 Ohio Department of Natural Resources validating the true economic reason it should be
21 longwall mined instead of block and pillared.

22 We urge the Department of Natural Resources to develop a brochure explaining the
23 impacts of longwall mining on surface owners. The brochure should include the rights a
24 landowner has to compensation for damages and water replacement.

25 Coal companies not owning land, upon which longwall and underground mines are
26 located, should be required by law to furnish a cash bond to ensure the payment for any
27 surface or subsurface damages to the property, structures or infrastructures.

28 We encourage research to determine the economic loss of coal resources above the
29 Pittsburgh #8 coal seam due to longwall mining.

Reclamation of Strip Mined Land

552

1 We recommend that state and/or federal reclamation laws be amended so that lands
2 important to the agricultural economy of eastern Ohio, but not necessarily meeting the
3 current definition of prime farmland, can be reclaimed with sufficient subsoil layers in
4 addition to the currently required restoration of topsoil.

5 We urge a change in the reclamation law to permit more gentle slopes when it would
6 be better than returning the slope to within five degrees of the original. We are opposed
7 to increasing the grade to more than a one-degree increase from the original.

8 We oppose the method of end dumping as an approved method of mine reclamation.

9 We will work to effect change in the federal and state reclamation laws to allow coal
10 companies to gain complete bond release on reclaimed land no longer than three years
11 following the meeting of reclamation standards.

12 We support the concept of federal legislation to extend the severance tax on coal for
13 the purpose of reclaiming abandoned mine lands. Such severance taxes should be fully
14 allocated to strip mine reclamation programs. As an alternative to federal legislation, we
15 support a state severance tax in a like amount to be used for reclamation of abandoned
16 mine lands. We encourage more timely evaluation of forage yield on reclaimed lands so
17 as not to impede the harvest of quality forage.

18 We encourage concerned farmers to become involved in helping to establish a
19 realistic method of obtaining pre-mining and post mining crop yield data on surface
20 mined land. We also urge the establishment of more realistic crop yield levels for
21 obtaining bond release. Both of these changes in statute and rule would enable farmer-
22 owners to gain earlier control of their land.

23 We support an expanded program of planting trees in stripmine reclamation as long
24 as current standards for soil replacement and water quality are maintained and as long as
25 farmers have the right to dictate reclamation of their land for cropping, forestry or
26 grazing.

27 We support ODNR Division of Mineral Resource Management applying the
28 Appalachian Regional Reforestation Initiative in strip mine reclamation as long as it has
29 the support of the landowner.

30 We encourage demonstration projects on converting unreclaimed stripmine land for
31 agricultural use.

32 Funding from the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Fund should be restored to 100
 33 percent in order to implement reclamation as authorized by the Surface Mining Control
 34 and Reclamation Act (P.L. 95-87.)

35 We urge the Ohio Department of Reclamation to collect bonds high enough to
 36 reclaim stripmined lands in the event coal companies go bankrupt.

37 We support research on and encourage use of coal combustion by-products.

Landowners Rights in Mineral Development

553

1 We encourage landowners to investigate the status of their property and mineral
 2 rights, by identifying and determining the status of any notarized and filed leases,
 3 easements, mineral right severances, and corresponding documents that show
 4 cancellation or abandonment of these agreements with a comprehensive title search.

5 We support legislation that:

- 6 1. Protects the rights and interests of landowners who are affected by industrial
 7 mineral operations. Such legislation should allow for public comment in the area
 8 affected by such mineral operations and assure that hydrologic damage issues are
 9 addressed before a permit is granted.
- 10 2. Protect the rights and interests of landowners by assuring that all mineral
 11 separation deeds are recorded promptly within 10 days to the landowner's real
 12 estate deed in order to be valid.
- 13 3. Requires coal strip mine owner/operators to supplement their surface damage
 14 indemnification to the landowner when strip mining is conducted 25 years or
 15 more after the original purchase of coal to reflect the value of the surface damage
 16 at the time of mining. Oil and gas permits issued before coal mining permits
 17 should supersede the coal mining. The mining company should be required to
 18 compensate landowners for their loss or drill a new oil and gas well.
- 19 4. Provides ownership of coal bed methane to the surface landowner.
- 20 5. Develops a Truth in Leasing/Right of Way Agreement Statement for Oil and Gas
 21 Development to improve understanding and protection of Ohio citizens.

22 The Ohio Farm Bureau urges energy service providers to recognize landowners
 23 holding natural gas storage field capacity leases on their property that were
 24 acquired for additional oil and gas exploration. Recognized provisions include:

- 25 1. Identification and leasing subsurface geologic formations where natural gas
 26 is injected, stored and withdrawn on an annual basis.
- 27 2. Additional infrastructure is present, facilitating injection, storage and
 28 withdrawal operations.
- 29 3. Direct pipeline connections facilitating delivery of storage gas to customers
 30 in regional, state and local markets.

31 Energy service providers acquiring leases focusing on natural gas storage
 32 capacity must recognize that these agreements were created to facilitate and protect
 33 market sourced natural gas, and do not necessarily address the harvesting of
 34 additional oil and natural gas resources in geologic formations near the storage
 35 field.

36 Leaseholders must be given the opportunity to work cooperatively with energy
 37 service providers to determine rights of access and leasing of geologic formations above
 38 and below storage field capacity for additional oil and gas exploration. Landowners

39 leasing storage field capacity must have the ability to negotiate and/or modify agreements
 40 to allow them to receive economic and environmental benefits similar to landowners with
 41 traditional oil and gas leases in the community.

Wildlife Management

Endangered Species 561

1 Species thriving in another state should not be listed as endangered or threatened in
 2 Ohio.

3 Land use should not be restricted based on the presence of an endangered species, or
 4 its habitat, without proper compensation to the landowner.

Hunting, Fishing and Trapping 562

1 We encourage those landowners that oppose Sunday hunting to exercise their right to
 2 prohibit hunting on their property. When future wildlife regulations are developed we
 3 suggest the Ohio Division of Wildlife consider the following:

- 4 1. Crop damage;
- 5 2. Wildlife population;
- 6 3. Private property rights and input from landowners; and
- 7 4. Highway safety.

8 We will work toward a program that will provide a practical means for landowners to
 9 lease their land for hunting privileges and will support legislation that limits liability for
 10 landowners.

11 Ohio's Recreational User Statute should be expanded to protect landowners that
 12 permit hunters on their property from liability for injuries or damages caused by the
 13 hunters.

14 We urge the Division of Wildlife to schedule fish and game hearings for smaller
 15 geographical areas and to hold at least one meeting on a day other than Sunday.

16 We encourage stronger enforcement of game laws (i.e., shooting across or from a
 17 road and poaching) with mandatory fines and/or sentences.

18 We oppose any further restrictions of current trapping methods.

19 We encourage landowners to allow hunting and trapping on their property to help in
 20 the control of wildlife populations.

21 We support the reinstatement of hunting license display on the backs of all hunters
 22 that are required to have a license.

23 We encourage the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife to
 24 work with public and private landowners to develop and increase public hunting access
 25 areas in metropolitan and urbanized areas.

26 We encourage the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to increase efforts to
 27 promote the sport of hunting with Ohio's young people.

28 We support a constitutional amendment that insures the right to hunt, trap and fish in
 29 the State of Ohio.

30 We oppose the elimination of commercial fishing.

31 We encourage landowners to give permission for hunters to follow wounded game
 32 onto their property.

33 We believe landowners, regardless of business structure, should be allowed to hunt on
 34 their own land without permits and also their spouse, children, grandchildren, siblings
 35 and parents to have the same reciprocal access.

36 We support the new automated game check system and recommend that landowners
 37 and registered hunters have consistent access for registering harvested animals.

38 We encourage the adoption of regulations to ensure that all tree stands and
 39 photographic equipment be identified with the hunter's name and contact information.

Wildlife Introduction

563

1 We encourage the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to work with landowners
 2 and hold at least one public hearing in proposed areas of native or new wildlife
 3 introduction.

4 We encourage that before the Ohio Department of Natural Resources or other agency
 5 introduces a new plant or animal species as wildlife, or as predator, plans for monitoring
 6 and control must be in place.

7 We oppose the reintroduction of predators into Ohio i.e. wolves, bobcats, cougars,
 8 bears, and poisonous snakes.

9 We encourage the Division of Wildlife to limit the relocation of wildlife in and
 10 around the state of Ohio.

Wildlife Violations

564

1 We support the enforcement of wildlife laws and the establishment of criminal
 2 penalties. We are opposed to civil penalties that make unreasonable charges for fish and
 3 animal loss due to accidental kills.

4 We favor legislation that would prohibit Ohio Division of Wildlife personnel from
 5 entering private homes or vehicles or walking onto private property without the
 6 permission of the property owner or search warrant.

Wildlife Control

565

1 We encourage farmers to contact their wildlife officer or wildlife specialists to report
 2 damage. We also encourage farmers to maintain good relationships with wildlife officers
 3 and wildlife specialists to help solve wildlife problems.

4 We encourage all active members to seek and use permits from the Ohio Department
 5 of Natural Resources to control damage from wildlife on their property.

6 We urge the Division of Wildlife to make depredation permits with fewer restrictions
 7 more available to farmers experiencing damage year round.

8 We encourage local officials to allow an exemption to firearms ordinances for the
 9 control of nuisance wildlife, specifically deer.

10 We encourage the development of wildlife habitat on private property that will reduce
 11 the need to purchase land for state development of habitat.

12 We encourage communication and cooperation between property owners and the
 13 Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife, for the purpose of wildlife
 14 control.

15 There is a need for both the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) and the Ohio
 16 Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) to focus on wildlife damage in the state. We
 17 recommend the establishment of a wildlife animal damage control advisory committee.

18 The committee should be comprised of a representative of the ODA, the ODNR, Ohio
19 State University Extension wildlife specialist, and an appropriate number of farmers and
20 sportsmen.

21 We encourage the development of technology and/or changes in regulations that will
22 allow for the elimination of nuisance burrowing wildlife.

23 The Ohio Department of Natural Resources should conduct a land use analysis prior
24 to the purchase of land for wildlife use.

25 We support the continuation of the wildlife specialist program in cooperation with
26 soil and water conservation districts with at least a 50 percent annual match for the
27 wildlife specialist.

28 We require that ODNR officers have probable cause before entering private property.

Animal Damage Control and Wildlife Damage Fund

566

1 We support additional animal damage control personnel to assist farmers in reducing
2 damage. The Ohio Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Agriculture
3 Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) should expand their cooperative
4 agreement to improve services to farmers.

5 We oppose the relocation of nuisance wildlife into the rural area. We support the
6 discretionary euthanasia of nuisance wildlife when trapped by a licensed nuisance
7 wildlife trapper.

8 We support research and the utilization of wildlife population control methods in
9 addition to hunting and trapping.

10 We will oppose the establishment of a hunter habitat stamp, the revenue from which
11 would be used to purchase land for hunting opportunities. We support such a program to
12 lease private land or compensate farmers for maintaining wildlife habitats.

13 We support the establishment of a cost-shared wildlife damage abatement program,
14 which includes labor, funded through a combination of license fees, hunting fines and
15 general revenue funds to account for wildlife related losses, including livestock disease
16 such as Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD).

17 We fully support an amendment to Ohio's Public Records Law that would prevent the
18 release of confidential information, such as name, address, etc. of farmers who participate
19 in lethal predator control programs.

Crop Damaging Birds and Animals

567

1 We urge the Ohio Division of Wildlife to take a more active role in helping reduce
2 the population of blackbirds and other crop damaging birds and animals. We will support
3 efforts to establish a year round open season on crows to reduce the overpopulation in
4 Ohio.

5 We support a research project that will compare wildlife damage to crops (including
6 hay) to controlled crop areas. We encourage more liberal distribution of wildlife
7 nuisance permits by the Ohio Division of Wildlife.

8 We encourage expanding the labeled use of current avian repellents to include wild
9 turkey.

10 We encourage agribusiness personnel to assist farmers in identifying wildlife damage.

Geese **568**

1 We strongly urge the Division of Wildlife to take steps to control the goose
 2 population in problem areas until it is no longer an economic problem for agriculture.
 3 Furthermore, we encourage the State of Ohio to petition the federal government to
 4 remove Canadian Geese from the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1916.

5 We condemn the practice of abandoning wild geese previously relocated for a
 6 Division of Wildlife goose preserve in Ohio. If geese feeding programs or preserves are
 7 abandoned, the Division of Wildlife should be required to remove/relocate these geese
 8 populations.

9 We support a yearlong statewide resident nuisance goose season and increased bag
 10 limits.

Turkey **569**

1 We encourage the Division of Wildlife to continue a fall wild turkey season, allow a
 2 hunter to be able to take two birds per permit, and allow the taking of hens in areas where
 3 turkeys are a problem. Establish a turkey hunting permit that can be used for the spring
 4 or fall season.

5 We oppose the stocking of wild turkeys in areas currently unpopulated by wild
 6 turkey.

Beaver **570**

1 Because of damage caused by an increase in beaver population, we recommend the
 2 Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife develop better methods of control.

Coyote **571**

1 We urge approval for “livestock protection collars, M-44 bait stations” and collarum
 2 snare for coyote control in the state of Ohio. We recommend that Ohio Farm Bureau
 3 continue to work with the Ohio Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of
 4 Agriculture, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, and the Ohio General Assembly in
 5 protecting Ohio’s flocks and herds from coyote and coydog depredation.
 6

7 We support a permanent state indemnity fund to reimburse farmers at replacement
 8 cost levels for livestock kills by coyotes and coydogs. This fund should be administered
 9 through the Ohio Department of Agriculture. If the fund is depleted before the year’s
 10 end, reimbursement should be made from the following year’s budget.

Deer **572**

1 We urge Ohio farmers and sportsmen to cooperate in an effort to hunt in Ohio and
 2 thus help reduce the state’s overpopulation of deer. Great economic damage is being
 3 done to crops in Ohio and an undue highway safety hazard exists due to increasing
 4 numbers of deer. It is obvious that there are too many deer in Ohio. The Division of
 5 Wildlife should go on an aggressive campaign to reduce the number of deer. The
 6 Division of Wildlife should:

- 7 1. Encourage research on repellents that would give growers additional protection;
- 8 2. Allow hunters in overpopulated deer areas to take seven deer, six of which must
- 9 be antlerless;

- 10 3. Expand the early primitive weapon season for deer to include increased hunting
11 areas, later dates to accommodate crop harvest, and increase number of days;
- 12 4. Decrease the cost of deer permits and successive permits for deer should not
13 require additional fees;
- 14 5. Make nuisance permits more available and consistent across all counties, and
15 make improvements by removing the restriction that hunters must live in the
16 county or contiguous county; making the permits available to control the damage
17 prior to the damage being severe; and making the number of permits available to a
18 landowner commensurate with the damage incurred and land acreage affected;
- 19 6. Exclude agricultural crop land as a component in the equation determining deer
20 range carrying capacity;
- 21 7. Establish a target population level on a county-by-county basis and allow deer to
22 be harvested until that number is achieved;
- 23 8. Allow bow hunters to hunt an additional one-half hour in the evening; and
- 24 9. Expand the Turn in a Poacher, Inc. (TIP) program to include more educational
25 television spot commercials encouraging hunting with permission.
- 26 10. Encourage the use of Pistol Caliber Rifles (PCR) to be included as legal firearms
27 during the statewide deer gun season.

28 We encourage the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife to use
29 a two tier license which would set hunting tag fees; for example, \$40 antler (buck) tag; \$5
30 antlerless deer; and support an increase in the non-resident license fee.

31 We support the reintroduction of in-season nuisance permits for does.

32 We support a regulated bow-hunting season within the state and metro park systems.

33 The term "deer" as it pertains to the Division of Wildlife should be defined as wild
34 white tail deer.

35 We support any legislation in conjunction with the Division of Wildlife to allow the
36 first day of gun season to be on Sunday to give private landowners only the first chance
37 of exercising their right to hunt on their own property, and following all current hunting
38 rules and regulations while protecting their property rights, thus giving them an
39 opportunity to take immediate family members and children hunting with less risk of
40 harm and no educational days missed.

41 We encourage legislation to reduce the deer population in Ohio to 250,000. We
42 encourage landowners to facilitate this goal by allowing hunters on their property.

43 To achieve the 250,000 population ODNR should consider any or all of the following
44 suggestions:

- 45 1. We encourage having a doe-only season and a three-day muzzle loaded deer
46 season the last week of October;
- 47 2. We support an open season from September to April on antlerless deer until the
48 population reaches a desired level;
- 49 3. We support requiring hunters to take a doe before a buck;
- 50 4. Professional outfitters should be allowed additional deer tags to issue to clients to
51 encourage more hunting and increase income opportunities to landowners; and
- 52 5. We support a longer youth and regular hunting season or a special two-week
53 season for farmers and property owners.
- 54 6. We support the reinstatement of the extra weekend of gun season in December.

55 We support efforts to work with the Division of Wildlife to develop and implement
56 programs whereby deer killed may be donated to food banks across the state.

57 ODNR needs to develop a crop indemnity program to compensate landowners for
58 loss and damage.

Ground Hog **573**

1 Because of damage to crops, building, and machinery, we recommend the Ohio
2 Department of Natural Resources find methods to greatly reduce the ground hog
3 population.

4 We support the discretionary use of lethal devices for the control of ground hogs.

Raccoon **574**

1 We support:

- 2 1. Year-round hunting season on raccoon.
- 3 2. Hunting raccoons with dogs.
- 4 3. Classifying raccoons and muskrats as a pest.

Black Vultures **575**

1 We support programs to reduce black vultures.

2 We oppose any permit fee to kill black vultures.

3 Farmers experiencing black vulture related livestock losses in one year should be
4 allowed to apply for a control permit prior to the next calving and lambing season.

5 We recommend that Ohio wildlife officers be authorized to issue damage control
6 permits for black vultures instead of the federal fish and game officials in order to
7 expedite the permitting process.

Feral Swine **576**

1 We urge the State of Ohio to take actions necessary to eradicate the feral hog
2 population.

3 We support making it illegal to import, maintain or hunt wild/feral hogs at private
4 hunting preserves and/or releasing hogs to roam at-large.

5 We support the use of dogs to hunt feral swine.

WEED AND PEST CONTROL

Weed and Pest Control **581**

1 We support enforcement of the law that requires highway departments, public
2 utilities, governmental bodies, private citizens, and corporations that own or lease land to
3 control noxious weeds, pests and nuisances on their properties. We encourage the
4 establishment of a state task force responsible for developing a more effective noxious
5 weed law. We encourage farmers to mow noxious weeds in time to prevent their
6 seeding.

7 We support control of all state listed noxious weeds, identified invasive and nuisance
8 plant species and the continual review and update of the lists and will continue to seek
9 adequate funding for research and control programs.

10 We support the practice of reseeded roadsides to provide wildflowers or
 11 grass/legume cover and enforcing the eradication of multiflora rose on state, federal,
 12 county, and township roadsides.

13 We support monitoring of the federal executive order regarding non-native invasive
 14 species as to its impact on agriculture.

15 We support the removal of abandoned orchards and vineyards through enforcement
 16 of current law and passage of additional legislation for control of pests and diseases that
 17 may be generated from these properties.

18 We believe landowners should have the right to determine the frequency and timing
 19 of mowing CRP enrolled land.

REGIONAL ISSUES

Darby Watershed 591

1 We support the actions of the agricultural community and their involvement in the
 2 development of the Darby Watershed Joint Board action plan and its implementation.

Scioto River Watershed 592

1 We support the continued funding of a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program
 2 (CREP) in the Scioto River Watershed. CREP is a local, state, federal and private
 3 partnership which is beneficial to individual farmers putting conservation practices on
 4 land to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution in the Scioto River and its watersheds.

Wayne National Forest 593

1 We encourage Wayne National Forest to stay with the most recent 10-year plan
 2 regarding the harvesting of timber.

3 We encourage Wayne National Forest to utilize funds for the development of
 4 recreational facilities instead of the acquisition of additional land.

5 Wayne National Forest should maintain line fences with adjoining property owners
 6 who are engaged in agricultural practices. If real estate taxes are not paid to local
 7 counties in the Wayne National Forest area, the payments in lieu paid to counties should
 8 be comparable to the income that would have been collected from real estate taxes.

9 We support legislation that withdraws Ohio's consent for the purchase of additional
 10 land for the Wayne National Forest.

11 All revenues generated from commercial activities related to the forest shall be
 12 returned to the U.S. Treasury to be appropriated at the discretion of Congress.

Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD) 594

1 Any assessment of the landowners by the MWCD needs to be fair and equitable.

2 The board of the MWCD should be expanded by either the appointment of members
 3 by the county commissioners of each respective county, or by election by the general
 4 public.

5 The MWCD should focus on its original purpose of water quality, flood control and
 6 conservation.

7 The MWCD needs to return a portion of any assessment collected back to the county
 8 where collected for conservancy district maintenance projects in that county.

9 We oppose the use of MWCD assessment monies for dredging reservoir basins when
10 the dredging is for recreational use and not flood control.

11 The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District should place a notice of meetings
12 in the daily newspaper in each county affected at least 14 days prior to the meeting.

13 The MWCD should reimburse county auditors and treasurers for the costs of the
14 additional work performed as a result of collecting the MWCD assessment.

15 The MWCD should avoid duplication of current available services, for example
16 hiring watershed technicians.

17 MWCD should make public all of their expenditures.

18 We encourage MWCD to delay the collection of assessments on the citizens of the
19 watershed until all oil and gas royalties and other income are exhausted.

Great Lakes Water Resources

595

1 The Great Lakes are one of America's most important natural public treasures.
2 Together, the Great Lakes account for 90 percent of the United State's surface fresh
3 water resources. The Great Lakes states and Canadian provinces serve as stewards of this
4 resource and have a shared duty to protect, conserve and manage these renewable but
5 finite waters. As a result we believe:

- 6 1. The authority to control, protect, and conserve the Great Lakes from diversion lies
7 with the Great Lakes states and Canadian provinces;
- 8 2. Water resources should be regulated at the state level, not the federal level,
9 reducing the chance that water resources could be exploited by other states; and
- 10 3. We should continue to monitor and actively participate in the implementation of
11 the Great Lakes Compact to ensure that agricultural interests are represented and
12 concerns addressed.

Gulf of Mexico Hypoxia Action Plan

596

1 We support the rights of states to develop programs that are scientifically based,
2 economically sound and to the maximum extent possible, delivered in a flexible and
3 voluntary manner to address the agricultural nonpoint source portion of the Gulf of
4 Mexico Hypoxia Action Plan (Action Plan). We believe that strategies to implement the
5 goals and objectives of the Action Plan must be developed and administered at local
6 level. Any policies made regarding implementation of the Action Plan must be based on
7 sound scientific data and must give proper consideration to the sustainability of a viable
8 agbioresource industry in the state of Ohio.

Blanchard River Watershed

597

1 We support the efforts to reduce the flooding problems in the Blanchard River
2 Watershed as long as agriculture and landowners rights are protected.

Lake Erie

598

1 We insist that there is a thorough comprehensive science based study of all point and
2 nonpoint source discharges into Lake Erie to evaluate their full impact on nutrients
3 transported into the lake before any widespread regulations are imposed only on the
4 agricultural community.

5 We encourage research for finding a useful purpose for the algae in Lake Erie and the
6 source(s) of the harmful algal blooms.

7 We support ending open lake dumping of dredge materials by the US Army Corps of
8 Engineers in the western basin of Lake Erie, including Maumee Bay, in favor of
9 beneficial land base use.