

OHIO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

2021 STATE POLICIES



**RESOLUTIONS ON STATE ISSUES ADOPTED BY THE VOTING DELEGATES
OF THE OHIO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION
102ND ANNUAL MEETING**

DECEMBER 2020

Please cite to the Ohio Farm Bureau State Policies using the following official citation format:

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MISSION

1 Working together for Ohio farmers to advance agriculture and strengthen our communities.

PREAMBLE

1 The Ohio Farm Bureau Federation is an independent, voluntary organization of Ohio
2 farmers and community stakeholders who are members of county Farm Bureaus. Basic
3 democratic principles are used throughout to govern the organization. Farm Bureau fosters
4 responsible citizenship and is proud to be respected as a leader throughout rural and urban
5 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 involves
8 all races, ages, sexes, commodities, production methods, religious beliefs and political
9 interests.

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

17 We will continue to develop, implement, create and support programs that seek to
18 improve the public understanding and image of all segments of production agriculture.

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

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

25 We encourage Nationwide to develop programs and services beneficial to all Farm
26 Bureau members and recommend that our members avail themselves of the full line of
27 products offered by the company.

28 We support all opportunities for agriculture to continue to grow as Ohio's number one
29 industry and advocate sound research driven management practices for all agricultural
30 production methods. We are concerned about economic development and quality of life
31 issues statewide, those unique to urban, suburban or rural communities, and the agricultural
32 opportunities available to each.

33 Greater emphasis should be placed on promoting the agricultural industry domestically
34 and internationally.

35 We support Ohio Farm Bureau Foundation's mission and programs, including capacity
36 building for state and county initiatives, scholarships, and programs focused on attracting
37 young people to careers in food and agriculture. We encourage county Farms Bureaus to
38 work with the Ohio Farm Bureau Foundation to achieve their charitable objectives.

SECTION 1: GOVERNANCE, ENERGY & LABOR

SECTION 1: GOVERNANCE, ENERGY & LABOR

FARM BUREAU

Leadership Development 101

1 Ohio Farm Bureau is committed to the long-term personal and professional leadership
2 development of its members by creating, facilitating and encouraging leadership programs,
3 such as Ohio Farm Bureau Youth Program, Young Ag Professionals and AgriPOWER,
4 within Ohio Farm Bureau and cooperating with allied organizations. We should explore and
5 expand youth leadership development opportunities that reflect the Ohio Farm Bureau
6 mission with like-minded groups outside the organization.

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

Farmer and Consumer Partnership 102

1 We will work to inform consumers about all aspects of agriculture. We understand that
2 consumers are generally removed from agriculture and need to be better connected to all
3 aspects of food, fiber and energy production from the farm level to the grocery store,
4 restaurant, farm market or other point of sale.

5 We support:

- 6 1. Farm Bureau members working to better understand the consumer perspective and
7 adopting a customer service mindset.
- 8 2. Ongoing efforts to engage the public about the importance of all animals and the
9 benefits from the relationship between people and animals, which are essential to the
10 health and well-being of both.

Nationwide 103

1 We support Nationwide's effort to be the premier agricultural insurer in the country. We
2 urge them to take an innovative and comprehensive approach that addresses the risk
3 management needs of a changing agricultural industry.

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

AGRICULTURE

Ohio Agriculture 111

1 We encourage all government officials, state and local, to recognize and promote
2 agriculture and agricultural jobs as an economic development tool for Ohio including an
3 agricultural component in JobsOhio.

4 We support farmers joining their respective commodity and trade organizations.

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

8 We support the production methods and use of genetically modified and organically
9 based products.

10 We oppose attempts to limit the production or use of genetically modified crops or
11 livestock.

Ohio Department of Agriculture

112

1 The position of Director of the Ohio Department of Agriculture should be maintained as a
2 Governor's cabinet level position and the agency should be operated as a stand-alone part of
3 state government focusing on issues pertaining to food, fiber and fuel, production/safety,
4 environmental quality and natural resource (soil and water) conservation.

5 We support ODA's jurisdiction over all livestock.

6 We will continue to work for appropriate funding for the Ohio Department of Agriculture
7 and maintain the importance of the department in its role in the health and safety of all
8 Ohioans. ODA regulatory efforts for public health and safety should be a budgeted expense
9 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 requiring ODA to adopt fuel quality testing standards and giving ODA and
13 the county auditors the authority to implement such testing. We support necessary funding
14 for such a program.

15 We encourage participation in the Century Farm Program.

Farm Service Agency

113

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

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

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

Agricultural Financing

114

1 We support the farmer-owned and controlled Farm Credit System. We support expansion
2 of Ag-LINK; the State of Ohio Linked Deposit Program designed to serve agriculture. We
3 support the current level of \$150,000 and encourage periodic review to ensure program
4 effectiveness.

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

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

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

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

Beginning Farmers

115

We support:

1. Incentive programs for both beginning farmers and those farmers leaving the industry. These programs could include but are not limited to tax incentives for persons who sell or lease land, facilities, machinery, livestock or other assets to beginning farmers.
2. Policies, programs and educational efforts that encourage succession planning by farm families and assist those farms with transitioning to the next generation.
3. Mentoring programs that link beginning farmers to experienced or retiring farmers to support the transition of knowledge skills, land and assets from one group to the next.

Cooperatives

116

We encourage the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation and member Farm Bureaus to cultivate a good relationship with all cooperatives. We support increased efforts to educate farmers and consumers about the benefits and business structure of cooperative membership, leadership development and patronage.

ELECTIONS

Term Limits

121

We support extending the term limit for state legislators to 12 years.

We support extending the term length for a state representative from two years to four years and extending the term length for a state senator from four to six years.

Political Campaigns

122

We support the enforcement of existing campaign finance laws and encourage the examination of further campaign finance reform.

We support legislation to prohibit the solicitation of contributions at the time of gathering signatures for an initiative petition.

We oppose contributions to political campaigns from foreign interests.

We support full disclosure of all campaign contributions.

We support that any issue presented on the ballot for election should clearly state how a “yes” or “no” vote impacts passage of the issue.

Political Education

123

The Agriculture for Good Government Political Action Committee (AGGPAC) must rely on individual members for contributions since organization funds cannot legally be used. More funds should be generated to support or oppose issues on the ballot and to contribute to deserving candidates who support Farm Bureau policy.

The Ohio Farm Bureau should:

1. Encourage farmers to become better informed and seek elected office or become actively involved in politics and government at the local, state and national levels;
2. Operate AGGPAC on a bi-partisan basis;
3. Encourage the members to participate as individuals in political party activities and serve in various capacities of the political party structure;
4. Provide convenient opportunities for members to voluntarily contribute to AGGPAC;
5. Encourage member Farm Bureaus to promote or provide activities which inform members of political issues, candidates and public officials and to recruit viable candidates to run for office;
6. Provide profiles of statewide candidates and issues;
7. Take a more aggressive role in recruiting and assisting candidates that are friendly to agriculture because of the effects of term limits; and
8. Encourage Farm Bureau members to take advantage of the credit against state income tax for contributions to candidates for state political office.
9. Work with AFBF to create a process that considers more than just an incumbents' voting record when determining the AFBF designation of Friend of Farm Bureau.

Judicial Elections

124

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

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

Special Elections

125

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

Student Voting

126

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

Right of Recall

127

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

Initiative and Referendum

128

We support reforming the process to amend the state constitution, including but not limited to:

1. increasing the amount of petition signatures needed to place a measure on the ballot,
2. increasing the percentage threshold for approval by voters,
3. strengthening the laws for petition signature gatherers, and
4. restricting the years in which an amendment may appear on the ballot to odd numbered years.

Redistricting **129**

- 1 We support a comprehensive review and reform of Ohio's current congressional
- 2 redistricting and apportionment process. We believe revisions to Ohio's redistricting
- 3 process, whether for congressional or state legislative districts should 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
- 8 4. Ensuring that land based, geographic references are used to connect all communities
- 9 and political subdivisions located within the legislative district.

Voting **130**

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The Secretary of State's ability to make voting more efficient, but not to the extent of
- 3 limiting the ability of citizens to vote.
- 4 2. Early voting, but it should be limited to a reasonable time.
- 5 3. Mail-in voting, with the requirement that mail-in ballots must be requested by a
- 6 registered voter with proof of identity.
- 7 4. Local governments and their respective Boards of Elections should have the authority
- 8 to choose election equipment and program vendors.

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 partnerships
- 7 and agreements with developers to responsibly use land and resources to develop energy
- 8 transportation, generation and distribution projects. We expect these partners to fully
- 9 disclose all parts of the development process, including installation and operation of facilities
- 10 as well as repair and remediation guidelines to put adjoining agricultural ground back into
- 11 production.
- 12 Ohio Farm Bureau urges companies and government agencies responsible for the
- 13 decommissioning of all power generation infrastructure to ensure the property and facilities
- 14 can and will be used in a safe and viable manner to benefit all.
- 15 Ohio Farm Bureau should provide leadership in the on-going development of a
- 16 comprehensive state energy policy that incorporates the use of coal, nuclear, natural gas,
- 17 petroleum and competitive renewable technologies. These renewable technologies include,
- 18 but are not limited to wind, solar, biomass, geothermal, hydroelectric and fuel cells.
- 19 We believe it is important to have multiple baseload and supplementary sources in the
- 20 state's energy portfolio to ensure reliability while simultaneously recognizing the economic
- 21 benefits of a competitive electricity market. All generation assets will be designed,

constructed and operated to meet North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) control performance, reliability and security standards.

We oppose legislative or regulatory programs that will increase the cost of electricity to businesses, farms and industries without evidence that the program is needed.

We support:

1. Utilization of methane as a renewable fuel when it is captured from processes using waste to energy technology, anaerobic digestion, biomass reaction and/or collection from landfills and abandoned coal mines.
2. Developing domestic energy from diverse sources, thereby creating economic opportunities for landowners, greater domestic energy security, and increased consumer access and energy options at affordable prices.
3. Developing our own natural resources to reduce the dependence on foreign fossil fuels.
4. Twenty-five percent of Ohio's energy needs being met through the use of clean coal, advanced nuclear, natural gas and renewable energy sources.
5. An increase in the percentage of electricity sold by Ohio's investor owned electric utilities come from renewable sources when economically viable.
6. Legislation permitting tax credits, grants and other incentives to develop renewable energy sources.
7. The development of public policies that encourage sustainable and renewable energy production, especially for small and community scale, decentralized situations.
8. Recognition of on-farm energy production as an agricultural product.
9. Farm and ranch owner access to liability insurance covering issues associated with on-site energy development.
10. Net metering prices paid by utilities for on-site generation to reflect the competitive price of current base-load power.
11. Incorporation of cost effective energy storage technology into renewable energy generation to help make these systems base load generation assets.
12. Energy development companies and/or investment groups notifying landowners when a lease on their land is sold or purchased.
13. Clearly defining specific production activities that keep an energy development lease active and in force.
14. Ohio maintaining daylight savings time year round with the elimination of the standard time change.

We encourage:

1. Upgrades to generation, transportation and distribution infrastructure that could provide Ohio consumers direct access to lower cost natural gas supplies and electric generation.
2. Landowners to explore creating negotiation groups advised by legal counsel, thereby leveraging aggregate acreage, group interest and bargaining positions when dealing with energy developers.
3. New energy service easements to have an ongoing obligation/payment due to the landowner of record. Furthermore, any such payment should not be split from the property.

- 66 4. PUCO, OPSB and FERC monitoring and enforcement of rules establishing and
 67 maintaining inspection and safe operation of energy generation, transmission and
 68 distribution infrastructure.

Electric Utility Infrastructure Development

142

- 1 Ohio Farm Bureau supports coordination between federal and state regulatory authorities,
 2 regional transmission organizations, public utilities and energy service providers to update
 3 and modernize electric generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure collectively
 4 referred to as the electric grid.
 5 Priority should be given to:
 6 1. Enhancing integrated procedures to improve system safety and security, provide
 7 resiliency and ensure reliability. Procedures should continue to adhere to guidelines
 8 established by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE),
 9 Underwriters Laboratories (UL) and the National Electrical Safety Code (NESC).
 10 2. Continued development and incorporation of technologies and systems that provide
 11 wind, solar and other intermittent generation technologies the capability to deliver
 12 supplies under baseload conditions.
 13 3. Continued development and enhancement of advanced metering infrastructure (AMI),
 14 utility interconnection, smart grid and micro grid protocols. These strategies need to
 15 support seamless, two-way energy, data transfer and communication between utility
 16 distribution networks, on-site generation technologies, as well as smart appliances
 17 that give consumers better control of energy usage and costs.
 18 4. Further development of technologies, services and education programs that provide
 19 opportunities for individual farm, business and residential energy consumers to better
 20 control their energy costs. These include, but are not limited to:
 21 a. Energy Efficiency/Peak Demand Reduction (EE/PDR): On-Site Energy Audits,
 22 Efficient Appliances, Lighting Controls, Appliance Recycling, Retro-
 23 Commissioning, New Building and Customized Facility Design.
 24 b. Electric load profiling/management software and energy storage capabilities.
 25 5. Continued development and integration of protocols supporting electric vehicle (EV)
 26 and related charging station deployment.

Deregulation

143

- 1 We support:
 2 1. Creation, development and customer participation in PUCO-approved programs with
 3 investor-owned utilities aimed at helping all ratepayers achieve energy savings.
 4 2. Cooperative and municipal utilities working with their leadership, members and
 5 residents to achieve energy savings.
 6 3. The following initiatives and helping energy consumers use these programs to control
 7 energy costs:
 8 a. Energy Audits: To help consumers identify and maximize savings opportunities,
 9 utilities should offer energy audit and consultation services that could be
 10 employed prior to any technology purchases, facility retrofits and/or service
 11 contracts.
 12 b. Utility Sponsored DSM/EE Options: Programs should be available for all
 13 customer classes and should include, but are not limited to efficient appliances,

- on-site energy audits, lighting controls, appliance recycling, retro-commissioning, new building and customized facility design.
- c. On-Site Generation, Interconnection and Net Metering: All customers wanting to use on-site generation should have access to an effective interconnection agreement with the utility. The agreement should govern all technical requirements, metering and crediting procedures. Credits generated by net metering should be competitive with current base-load rates.
 - d. Creation of Self-Help Groups: Community aggregation should be expanded. Local governments should work with community-based organizations to create product and service-buying groups that provide energy audits, building retrofits, new construction custom programs, appliance purchases and on-site generation options. Local Infrastructure Refits: Education programs concerning advanced metering infrastructure (AMI) need to expand. Outreach activities should explain how two-way communication between the customer and utility via the meter can help individual consumers, communities, service providers and the utility collaboratively manage energy delivery and costs.
 - e. Utility Rate Reviews: A utility rate review could be initiated when a consumer pursues a choice program offer, purchases new technology, retrofits facilities or enters a service contract. We support PUCO approved procedures providing consumers with utility-based rate reviews prior to any service and/or technology purchase. Reviews should advise customers about possible rate impacts and a listing of options that address the issues.
4. The creation of landowner coalitions and/or similar associations so-as-to create greater and equitable financial return to the entire local community for renewable and conventional energy development.
- We oppose any change to the composition of the Ohio Consumers Counsel governing board that would remove family farm or agricultural representation.

Biofuels and Biogas

144

We support:

1. Research, development and utilization of agricultural products to create solid and liquid biofuels and biogas.
2. Creation and use of solid biofuels and biogas to help Ohio-based utilities, energy service providers and industrial energy consumers combine the use of renewable resources with investments in clean coal and other advanced energy technologies.
3. Construction and/or expansion of solid and liquid biofuel production facilities in Ohio.
4. The use of ethanol in coal desulfurization.
5. Aggressive expansion of the Ohio Development Services Agency's biofuel utilization program to provide more resources helping fuel distributors and local retail outlets install more infrastructure and pumps to distribute biofuels and other renewable and/or alternative forms of energy to the public.

We encourage:

1. Research regarding cellulosic ethanol production utilizing woody biomass, grasses, compost and other hydrocarbon-rich agricultural and food processing byproducts and/or residues.

- 18 2. Expansion of liquid biofuels for use in the consumer market as well as promotion of
19 these energy sources as they enhance efforts for a cleaner environment, enhanced
20 energy independence and national security.
- 21 3. Creating a system of grants to promote installation of digester systems where biogas
22 can be used for electric generation and/or motor fuel.
- 23 4. Utilization of Ohio's expedited permitting process for advanced and renewable liquid
24 fuel plants to include solid biofuel and biogas production facilities.
- 25 5. The use of biofuels, at the highest percentage blend economically feasible, in all
26 vehicles as distribution systems improve. We urge each Farm Bureau member to
27 actively promote the use and marketing of ethanol enhanced gasoline and soy-
28 biodiesel and continue support of an aggressive education campaign to promote the
29 benefits of ethanol-blended gasoline and the differences between ethanol and
30 methanol.
- 31 6. The State of Ohio to give preference to bio-based fuels in any alternative fuels
32 program.
- 33 7. Further research and development of uses of the by-products of biofuel and biogas
34 production.
- 35 8. State and local government agencies to use alternative fuels and to purchase biofuel
36 and/or biogas compliant vehicles.

Coal

145

1 We support the utilization of coal as an economical and readily accessible source for
2 current electrical generation needs, as well as research and development in clean coal
3 technologies recognized by the National Energy Technology Laboratory to provide for future
4 energy requirements.

5 We urge preservation of the State of Ohio Abandoned Mine Land Reclamation program
6 to ensure resources are available for effective repair and remediation for mining properties
7 throughout the state.

Oil and Gas Exploration/Infrastructure

146

1 We support:

- 2 1. ODNR Division of Oil and Gas Resources Management enforce all orders and rules
3 governing oil and gas exploration, infrastructure development and related activities.
- 4 2. Collaborative efforts between ODNR, state agencies, energy service providers, local
5 government leaders and rural residents to inspect, repair, remediate and restore on
6 farm resources and public infrastructure impacted by drilling, transportation, storage
7 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 and
10 gas exploration, refining and pipeline projects get underway in many neighborhoods.
- 11 4. Strategies that balance conservation of farm and community resources with the need
12 to eliminate physical constraints and network interconnections required to get new
13 energy supplies to refineries and markets.
- 14 5. Preservation of current rules governing oil and gas exploration that protect soil and
15 water resources, as well as recognize implied covenants created through Ohio court
16 decisions that give landowners with lease agreements guaranteed provisions to ensure

- 17 repair, remediation and compensation on the impact of oil and gas exploration,
18 refining and pipeline construction on their property.
- 19 6. New oil or gas pipelines follow existing pipeline easements whenever possible.
- 20 7. Pipeline owners being assessed an annual service tariff based on the amount of
21 product transported through their systems. Proceeds will be used by local
22 governments for community development projects and by impacted landowners for
23 further repair, remediation and enhancement/use of ground impacted by company
24 right of ways.
- 25 8. The collaboration between ODNR – Division of Oil and Gas and the PUCO to readily
26 identify and differentiate natural gas well collection networks offering long term free
27 gas provisions to leaseholders from actual natural gas public utility systems. We
28 support PUCO jurisdiction for companies offering natural gas utility service,
29 regardless of the number of customers served, size of territory, geographic location
30 and programs offered.
- 31 9. The implementation of compressed natural gas fueling stations.
- 32 10. A collaborative effort between ODNR, Ohio Oil and Gas Association, Ohio State
33 University Extension, energy service providers, impacted landowners and community
34 stakeholders to develop a horizontal oil & gas production and processing manual as
35 an educational document for local governments and landowners.
- 36 11. The public record documentation process whereby division orders are not required to
37 be signed by the landowner.
- 38 12. Requiring division orders to not contain language that is contrary to and/or negates
39 provisions created in a properly negotiated, executed and recorded lease agreement.
- 40 13. Work conducted by members of the PUCO Resource Advisory Council to monitor
41 conditions and coordinate efforts that prevent propane supply shortages.
- 42 14. Encouraging landowners to exercise their right to file entire oil and gas lease
43 agreements in lieu of the practice of energy exploration companies filing only lease
44 memorandums of release as a matter of public record in the County Recorder's office.
- 45 15. An increase of fees for liquid pumped into injection wells with one-half to stay in the
46 county where the well is located.
- 47 16. ODNR-Division of Oil and Gas to create a process where transparent reporting of
48 what materials are being injected into US EPA Class II injection wells is available to
49 local government officials, Health Department and other interested parties as a matter
50 of public record.
- 51 17. Reestablishment of the Ohio Power Siting Board's evaluation, approval and rules
52 enforcement for granting Certificates of Convenience, Public Need and Necessity for
53 intrastate pipelines transporting natural gas liquids with the exception of a provision
54 to establish two pipeline route alternatives.
- 55 18. Working with PUCO Public Affairs division to establish a dedicated call center to
56 report and forward problems concerning all pipelines and related infrastructure to the
57 appropriate regulatory and enforcement authorities.
- 58 19. Creation of a process in utility scale right-of-way construction projects where special
59 easement provisions concerning construction, remediation and vegetative
60 management procedures negotiated by individual landowners make it into company
61 construction work orders on their property.

20. Creation of a process whereby interested parties can apply and show just cause to be recognized as a Party of Record in ODNR Division of Oil & Gas Rule Making Proceedings.
21. Establishing time limits on payment of royalties. Withholding of royalties can only be assessed to royalty owners and properties with challenged titles on mineral rights within the drilling unit and cannot impact payments to royalty owners with effective leases within the unit.
22. Establishing a minimum royalty payment of 1/8 or 12.5% payment, to the mineral interest owner for all oil and gas related production.
23. Requiring pipeline companies to provide information about gas transmission, liquid transmission, and landowner rights concerning development and operation of area pipelines. This includes complete transparency of critical infrastructure, safety history and response protocols.

Nuclear

147

1 We support:

- 2 1. The use of nuclear power as an important component of base-load power.
- 3 2. All efforts to increase its safety by using the latest in digital controllers.
- 4 3. Digital simulators for training plant operators in emergency procedures.

Wind and Solar

148

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

4 These should include:

- 5 1. A pre-application conference with local public officials that addresses local
6 community education/outreach, environmental compatibility and public need for a
7 proposed facility;
- 8 2. An initial public meeting where applicant engineering staff and managers can answer
9 technical questions posed by local public officials and community stakeholders, as
10 well as advise affected persons of the upcoming project of their rights and abilities to
11 work with developers to address concerns. Information gathered will be used by the
12 applicant to enhance a plan to continue education/outreach activities between the
13 company and the community.
- 14 3. Examination of local zoning rules and development plans, as well as an explanation
15 of what local rules and plans apply and do not apply as part of the OPSB process.
- 16 4. Establishment of an accessible local office by the developer, ensuring community
17 members have access to company representatives to discuss development issues and
18 possible concerns;
- 19 5. Creation of an application that evaluates economic, environmental and aesthetic
20 impacts on the community as defined in the Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 4906 and
21 the Ohio Administrative Code (OAC), Chapter 4906. The application is to be posted
22 as a matter of public record on the OPSB website, with electronic and hard copies
23 available at all public libraries in the county, the office of the county commissioners
24 and through the township trustees in township within the project area;

6. Scheduling of adjudicatory and local public hearings, enabling citizens, interest groups and governmental entities to present testimony and included in the case as evidence;
7. Identifying OPSB staff responsible for inspections and enforcement on such activities;
8. Consultation with the county engineer on issues pertaining to his/her jurisdiction.

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

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

On-Site Generation

149

We support:

1. Incorporation of an option for on-site generation facilities using wind, solar and/or other renewable energy technologies into construction plans for school and local government facilities
2. Classification of alternative energy structures on farms otherwise qualified for CAUV as agricultural structures for zoning and property tax purposes.

Electric Service

150

We support:

1. Rate schedules be established to promote energy conservation, daily off-peak usage and off-peak seasonal usage in agriculture without the penalty of unreasonably high demand charges and minimum monthly bills. Farm rates should match or never exceed the residential rate.
2. The use of Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) technology and its greater use throughout Ohio for utility customers.
3. The State of Ohio in cooperation with electric utilities to establish an educational program to shift energy use to non-peak times and to mitigate energy charge increases that may result from rate restructuring.
4. Legislation to require municipal power companies to pay the same taxes as other electric companies (gross receipt tax and property tax).
5. Power companies working with customers to locate and resolve problems with stray voltage.
6. Expanding the availability of three-phase electric service in all rural areas.
7. The establishment of a PUCO approved demand service rate for all agricultural societies served by investor-owned utilities in the State of Ohio.
8. PUCO regulated utilities to charge for actual usage instead of peak demand rates for county agricultural societies and independent fairs.

We oppose:

1. Electric companies asking any rate increase to compensate for the loss of income (referred to as delta revenue) from reduced rates given industries, schools and municipalities.
2. PUCO regulation of Rural Electric Co-ops.

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 process
4 ensuring timely migrant labor camp inspections with licenses being issued for occupancy and
5 relief from regulations that create an unreasonable burden on the housing owner.

6 We encourage the U.S. Department of Labor to approve the Ohio Department of Health
7 as the housing inspection agency for the H-2A program in Ohio.

8 We support the reinstitution of funding for the Ohio Migrant Labor Camp Improvement
9 Program, or the development of another cost-sharing program to assist migrant labor camp
10 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 defined
3 by the H2A program) for temporary worker programs as required by U.S. laws and regulations
4 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 punitive
7 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) laws.

Unemployment Insurance 155

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

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

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

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

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

Workers' Compensation

156

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

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

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

We oppose the increase in minimum fees.

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

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

We urge better administrative auditing and legislative efforts to protect the Workers' Compensation fund.

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

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

New Hire Reporting

157

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

Workforce Development

158

We support:

1. Enhanced research, development and programming to meet the workforce development needs in Ohio agriculture and the advanced energy sector.
2. A closer collaboration between local business, industry, health providers, agriculture and education to ensure educational programs are not only aligned with college entrance requirements, but also local employment needs and opportunities.
3. Programming and training that educates on sanitation, food standards and meat processing to help build the workforce pool for our meat and food processing establishments.
4. The Ohio Rural Jobs Act.

SECTION 2: QUALITY OF LIFE

SECTION 2: QUALITY OF LIFE

EDUCATION

Agricultural Awareness 201

- 1 We support educating the public, including the media, through a variety of different
- 2 mediums about all types of agriculture and life on the farm. OFBF should leverage its
- 3 resources by 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 day,
- 7 week and year;
- 8 3. The development of agriscience based courses and the granting of science and/or
- 9 college credit for such courses;
- 10 4. Funding for agricultural education programs for all students, regardless of school of
- 11 attendance, race, national origin, sex, religion, handicap, or age;
- 12 5. Increased funding for Career Technical Education.
- 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. Agriculture education programs and FFA in local school districts.
- 16 9. Local educational systems which allow students to take college preparatory courses
- 17 and agricultural education courses;
- 18 10. Ongoing alignment of secondary agricultural education programs with related college
- 19 programs that leads to articulated college credit and prepares students for high
- 20 technology agricultural and agribusiness related careers;
- 21 11. Students having the opportunity to take one semester of life skills education which
- 22 includes agricultural education, family and consumer sciences, personal finance, and
- 23 industrial technology components prior to graduation; and
- 24 12. Programs that assure farmers have access to adult agricultural education that provides
- 25 financial management, record keeping, financial analysis instruction and retirement
- 26 and estate planning.
- 27 13. Schoolteachers participating in the “Food, Land and People” training program to
- 28 enhance “Ag in the Classroom”.
- 29 14. The FFA Career Development Events (CDE) program as an opportunity for FFA
- 30 members throughout the State of Ohio to gain knowledge of agricultural topics
- 31 outside of the normal classroom environment. The Ohio FFA should make every
- 32 effort to schedule these CDE events in a manner throughout the school year in order
- 33 to allow as many interested FFA members the opportunity to participate.
- 34 15. Expansion of supervised agricultural experience (SAE) programs and other
- 35 experiential programs that encourage students to participate in out-of-school
- 36 experiential learning activities that include internships, career research, job

- shadowing, job placement and entrepreneurial job activities. We encourage greater support of student out-of-school activities by industry, agriculture, and school administration.
16. Expansion of adult training and retraining programs, in view of accelerating technological and social changes. We urge that federal and state programs be coordinated to make better use of existing facilities.
 17. Retaining the agriculture education leadership team at the Ohio Department of Education that includes three agricultural education consultant positions and one administrative position to assist the programming needs of the Agriculture Education Program.
 18. Assisting the Ohio Department of Education in securing agriculture industry representatives to help develop career technical education content standards that is the foundation for agricultural education programs in preparing the future workforce.
 19. Efforts to promote, encourage and educate regarding urban agriculture.
 20. Efforts to promote, encourage, and educate youth and the public regarding careers in agriculture.
 21. More course material on financial management and business operations for both production agriculture farms and broader agricultural industries within agricultural education programs.
 22. The adoption of new and innovative practices that will provide for the recruitment, training and retention of agriculture education teachers.
 23. Continued collaboration with the Ohio AgriBusiness Association and the Ohio Department of Education to develop assessments and industry credentials for career technical students and adults in the agriculture sector and to work with the agricultural industry to promote and encourage the use of said assessments and credentials as hiring factors by employers.
 24. High school students seeking higher education opportunities and their families to undergo training in student financial aid and student loan processes.

Higher Education

203

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

8. More course material on financial management and business operations for both production agriculture farms and broader agricultural industries within agricultural programs.
9. Working collaboratively with Central State University as they continue to work toward meeting their land grant mission and goals.
 - a. Improve and develop infrastructure to meet the dynamic demands of the agricultural industry.
10. The development of standards and processes by which Ohio's institution of higher education can offer college credit for Ohio youth who complete advanced 4-H projects and FFA Proficiency Awards.

We oppose:

1. Ohio's state-funded universities making political or social statements through their food purchasing practices.

Public Education

204

We support:

1. Rural students having the same opportunities and benefits offered to their urban and suburban counterparts. Education programs should give breadth, quality and maximum opportunity in education to our citizens.
2. Distance learning programs made possible by new technologies.
3. A coordinated effort among agricultural groups to expand the Ag in the Classroom program.
4. Creating the network necessary to establish farm to school food programs throughout Ohio.
5. Including practical and life skills that incorporate personal money management at our elementary, middle and high school curriculums.
6. The integration of agriculture and related industry in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) curriculum.
7. A form of physical activity during each school day.
8. The agricultural STEM schools.
9. A Farm Bureau appointed seat on any agricultural STEM school governing board.
10. School districts to accept an open enrollment policy.
11. Organizations working together where possible in developing positive agricultural/environmental literacy programs for youth and adults.
12. The development and use of materials and the necessary support to integrate basic agricultural/environmental concepts, including watershed education, into K-12 grade instruction and standards.
13. Increasing school activities and programs to educate all students about the origins and production practices of food, fiber and fuel.
14. The enforcement of penalties for drugs, alcohols and illegal weapons used or found in schools.
15. Healthy food choices for all Ohio students utilizing Ohio farm products, to ensure the well-being of Ohio youth. Vending machines in all school facilities should contain healthy options with student input.
16. The repeal of the Common Core Standards for the State of Ohio.

17. Legislation that restores control of testing, teacher evaluations, learning standards and curriculum to local districts.
 18. Expansion of experiential programs in all fields of study that encourage students to participate in out-of-school experiential learning activities, including internships, career research, job shadowing, job placement, and entrepreneurial job activities.
 19. Promotion of trade schools, apprenticeships and other non-traditional post-secondary options.
 20. Drug abuse prevention education as a part of the general curriculum.
 21. All state board of education members being elected, but if appointed positions continue, an agricultural education professional being appointed to represent the agricultural community.
- We oppose:
1. The establishment, by law, of a minimum school district population.
 2. The use of public funds to any community, STEM, or charter schools unless they are held to the same standards as public schools.
 3. Funding students who transfer out of their home district with state foundation funding deductions that exceed the per pupil state funding allocation received by the home district.

School Funding

205

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

- 27 12. A supplemental funding formula for career technical education programs that
 28 provides funds in addition to the state's main school funding formula. This includes
 29 programs incentivizing, through funding, agricultural career tech programs with
 30 appropriate student/teacher ratios and adequate extended time.
- 31 13. A new, comprehensive school funding formula for Ohio which
 32 a. Is rational, understandable, & transparent; is based on actual costs of Ohio
 33 education; and respects local control.
 34 b. Addresses the critical needs of providing basic instructional resources; basic
 35 transportation needs; adds funds for poverty and mental health; assists special
 36 needs; gifted programs; and English language learners; improves school security
 37 and school bus safety; and invests in Career Technical Education and STEM
 38 programs; and addresses Educational Service Centers.
- 39 We oppose:
- 40 1. Any increase in the 10-mill limitation on inside millage.
 41 2. Any constitutional amendment regarding school funding that is deemed fiscally
 42 irresponsible, fails to help rural schools and lessens the taxpayers' voice as expressed
 43 by the state legislature.
 44 3. Legislation funding public education through cuts in the funding of the Ohio
 45 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 to
 5 assure that The Ohio State University accomplishes its stated mission, which is to
 6 promote a sound and prosperous agriculture and rural life as indispensable to
 7 national prosperity and security. (The Morrill Act of 1862 established the Land
 8 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 Ohio
 15 State University College of Food, Agricultural and Environmental Sciences,
 16 Agricultural Technical Institute, Ohio Agricultural Research and Development
 17 Center, and Ohio State University Extension.
- 18 d. The timely replacement of extension experts lost through retirement or attrition to
 19 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 Institute,

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

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

Ohio State University Extension

222

- 1 We support:
 - 2 1. The concept of OSU Extension and its purpose of delivering unbiased research and
 - 3 science-based information to farmers and communities and providing youth
 - 4 development opportunities. As part of a transformation to ensure its long-term
 - 5 sustainability and adherence to this purpose, OSU Extension should:
 - 6 a. Define its purpose and increase its emphasis on agriculture and natural resources,
 - 7 nutrition and 4-H Youth Development.
 - 8 b. Provide extension services in every county as a first priority, with the exploration
 - 9 of regional/multi-county services to address funding issues and efficiency.
 - 10 c. Develop a new funding model that is sustainable, equitable and addresses
 - 11 challenges to local funding.
 - 12 d. Increase collaboration with other agricultural and/or youth organizations with
 - 13 similar missions, which may include collaboration on office space, staffing,
 - 14 administrative functions and/or programming,
 - 15 e. Improve communication with constituents regarding this transformation.
 - 16 f. Continue with efforts to promote, encourage and educate regarding urban
 - 17 agriculture.
 - 18 2. Youth in every county having the opportunity to participate in 4-H. In the event that
 - 19 a county or region no longer has a functioning 4-H program, OSU Extension should

- 20 provide a mechanism that allows those youth to participate in 4-H programs in their
21 respective counties.
- 22 a. In the event that a county 4-H program is terminated mid-year due to lack of
23 funding, after 4-H members have paid their 4-H dues and started their projects,
24 OSU Extension nonetheless has an obligation to allow those members to remain
25 4-H members for the remainder of the calendar year and finish their projects,
26 including exhibiting such projects at county and state fairs as 4-H members. 4-H
27 members already participating in a neighboring county's 4-H program should be
28 allowed to continue participating in that program even if their home county loses
29 its 4-H program.
- 30 b. In the event that every youth in Ohio does not have the opportunity to participate
31 in 4-H, we support an amendment to the Junior Fair Livestock Division
32 Competition Standards to expand eligibility requirements for exhibition of
33 livestock in the Ohio State Junior Fair to members of other recognized youth
34 organizations (such as Ohio Farm Bureau Youth) or the youth program of a
35 recognized breeding association (such as the BEST program through the Ohio
36 Cattlemen's Association), so long as the organization provides adequate
37 supervision and training for both participating youth and adult volunteers and
38 requires participating youth to complete educational workshops, maintain records,
39 attend Livestock Quality Assurance training, etc., similar to existing 4-H and FFA
40 programs.
- 41 3. Encouraging OSU Extension to support county extension educator's efforts to
42 provide comprehensive programming in all four areas when funding is available.
- 43 4. OSU Extension modifying the new rules for county extension educators to allow
44 educators to provide programming in areas outside their respective appointments.
- 45 5. OSU Extension's decision to allow counties to choose which specialty educator they
46 want to employ.
- 47 6. We support OSU Extension allowing educators to hold a minimum of a bachelor's
48 degree upon their initial appointment.
- 49 7. A viable Extension system that:
- 50 a. Plays a larger role in the community than just the county office.
- 51 b. Improves use of technology as a communication tool between farmers and OSU
52 Extension.
- 53 c. Explores the redesign of extension around discovery themes
- 54 d. Prioritizes the flow of information to the community.
- 55 8. Efforts of the Ohio AgriAbility program that promotes success in agriculture for
56 Ohio's farmers and farm families who are coping with a disability or long-term health
57 condition.
- 58 9. The OSU CFAES Center for Cooperatives as a resource assisting farmers and the
59 community to use the cooperative model to address business and community needs.
- 60 10. The Ohio Climate Office at OSU monitoring and analyzing long-term climatic and
61 short-term weather conditions of interest to agriculture, and encourage members to
62 participate in data reporting networks on their properties. Confidentiality protections
63 must be in place for all landowners who participate in any data collecting efforts.
- 64 11. OSU Extension working collaboratively with Central State University to provide
65 complementary services.

HEALTH

Health Care

231

1 We Support:

- 2 1. Efforts to ensure access to quality health care and medical coverage in rural
- 3 communities, including collaborative efforts to fund care, educate rural residents and
- 4 attract medical personnel.
- 5 2. Association health plans
- 6 3. Expansion of telehealth services where in person services may not be accessible.

7 We oppose:

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

Health Service

232

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 as health
- 5 care providers.
- 6 3. Community based health care services as cost effective alternatives to
- 7 institutionalized care.
- 8 4. Development of more assisted living services for the citizens of rural areas.
- 9 5. Proper funding and community support for programs that will help reduce and
- 10 eliminate Ohio's opiate epidemic including programs that focus on preventative
- 11 education, medication, treatment and methods to reduce relapse including issues of
- 12 housing and employment.
- 13 6. Proper funding for drug and alcohol abuse programs and mental health services, and
- 14 prudent regulations on alcohol and tobacco to protect youth and vulnerable members
- 15 of our community.
- 16 7. The establishment and growth of the Ag Crisis Coalition and other programs that
- 17 would address the mental health needs of Ohio farmers and rural communities.
- 18 8. We support collaborative efforts, including ODH and ODNR, to raise awareness of
- 19 tick-borne illnesses in the state of Ohio, and funding for research, treatment, and
- 20 control.

SAFETY

Safety

241

1 We support:

- 2 1. Collaboration with state and local entities to create education programs for farmers
- 3 and residents, including tractor safety, rural road safety, fertilizer and chemical
- 4 security issues, farm safety and identification and safe disposal of drugs and drug
- 5 paraphernalia.

2. Convenient certification and re-certification training that includes agricultural awareness that is made available for emergency medical technicians, fire fighters, humane agents, first responders, emergency managers, military and other public safety volunteers. Training should include focus on farm machinery operation, grain bin rescue, and entrapment extraction.
3. Increased realistic training requirements for anyone serving in the foregoing roles in a volunteer capacity.
4. Community members serving in volunteer safety roles, including volunteer fire or EMS personnel, and incentives to encourage service in those roles.
5. The voluntary posting of easily recognized emblems where chemicals are stored to ensure the safety of our firefighters, since many chemicals, when burned, may emit toxic fumes.
6. Utilities placing warning sheaths on guy wires in crop fields.
7. Installing ear protection symbols on any equipment that will emit sounds greater than 85 decibels, which is the level of sound that is considered dangerous.
8. Displaying reflective house numbering signs in an effort to reduce the response time for emergency vehicles.
9. All farmers using ROPS (Roll Over Protection Structures) and seat belts when operating farm tractors.
10. Local emergency personnel training in farm machinery access, grain bin rescue and entrapment extraction.
11. Education and use of the NOAA (National Oceanographic Atmospheric Administration) radio network by working with local and state public safety officials.
12. Farmers to have a farm safety plan.
13. A ban on the use of sky lanterns or similar items due to their risk as an environmental or fire hazard, or potential animal harm.
14. The current ban on the use of fireworks. If fireworks should be legalized, these items should be taxed appropriately to fund fire prevention, safety and veterans services.
15. Reviewing and establishing safety and siting regulations for commercial gun ranges.

Motor Vehicle/Road Safety

242

We support:

1. The Ohio Department of Transportation placing flashing stop signs at dangerous rural intersections of state routes;
2. The placement of reflective tape on all stop sign posts;
3. Placement of stop signs at intersections should have an indication whether it is a two-way, four-way, or some other intersection configuration;
4. Stop ahead signs, rumble strips or blinkers at dangerous intersections. We encourage the Ohio Department of Transportation to consider local input and give more emphasis to installation of traffic lights at dangerous rural intersections;
5. Red and white stripes on all truck beds, semi-trucks and trailers, and amber tape on farm equipment so they are more visible in hazy and foggy conditions;
6. Keeping highway white lines painted and installing more surface reflectors at intersections and on hills and curves;

- 14 7. The development and use of educational materials and testing, including in drivers’
15 education courses, related to signage, lighting, signaling, passing agricultural
16 equipment and safe driving practices;
- 17 8. That all newly manufactured cars be equipped with daytime front and rear running
18 lamps to ensure driver safety;
- 19 9. Legislation requiring the proper use of additional accessory highway lights that are
20 typically mounted below the standard headlights. These unfocused high intensity
21 lights should be used to provide additional wide range illumination only when the
22 high beams are in use;
- 23 10. More liberal use of reduced speed limits on rural roads where road topography
24 warrants such speed limit reduction;
- 25 11. The Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles clearly display the county names on all Ohio
26 license plates;
- 27 12. The use of yellow “Prepare to Stop When Flashing” signs to warn of upcoming traffic
28 lights on high-speed highways or dangerous intersections;
- 29 13. The standards required to install traffic safety improvements being based on
30 accident/incident rates;
- 31 14. State and local road authorities giving consideration to the movement of farm
32 equipment when placing traffic roundabouts, safety guardrails, and signage along
33 roadways;
- 34 15. Ohio Department of Motor Vehicles to allow options for renewing vehicle
35 registration for commercial vehicles and farm trucks to be conducted via U.S. Mail or
36 the internet;
- 37 16. The mowing of roadways prior to June 1 and periodically through the summer to
38 control noxious weeds and improve safety;
- 39 17. We support mowing and other maintenance to sustain a clear line of vision on the
40 highway right-of-way for a distance of 500 feet from any intersection;
- 41 18. Liability protection of landowners when maintaining road rights of way on their
42 property;
- 43 19. School zone signs clearly designating which times restricted hours are in effect.
- 44 20. The proper use of safety belts and child restraint seats;
- 45 21. The use of hands-free communication devices when operating a motor vehicle;
- 46 22. Joggers, pedestrians and cyclists wearing some kind of reflective cloth after night or
47 evening while on all roads and streets;
- 48 23. Flashing yellow lights on frequently stopping vehicles for use during predawn and
49 early evening hours;
- 50 24. Further research by state and local transportation authorities to determine areas of
51 high vehicle/buggy/pedestrian/bicycle/farm equipment traffic and accident rates and
52 the prioritization of those roadways for construction of buggy/pedestrian/bicycle
53 lanes and widening for farm equipment;
- 54 25. The requirement that buggies have visible unobscured LED lighting on the rear to
55 allow oncoming motorists to easily recognize buggies in their lane; and
- 56 26. Inclusion of farm equipment safety on roundabouts in the driver’s education
57 curriculum.

58 We encourage operators and passengers of motorcycles, bicycles, mopeds, snowmobiles
59 and all-terrain vehicles to use helmets during operation.

Railroads and Crossing Safety**243**

We support:

1. Adequate lighting with stop signs or mechanical warning devices at all railroad crossings. Visibility should be maintained including weed and brush removal and control. Railroad cars should not be parked on sidings where the safe view of the crossing is compromised. All railroad cars should have reflective Department of Transportation tape placed on both sides to improve night visibility.
2. Regular inspection of railroad crossings, including pothole repair. Timely removal of railroad crossing signs when railroad tracks have been closed. Any problems should be repaired in a timely manner.
3. Amending the Ohio Revised Code to allow state, county, township and municipal highway departments to erect stop signs at unlighted and non-gated railroad crossings.
4. Increasing the amount railroads pay for safety improvements to crossings from the current 10% to 50% of the project cost.
5. Improvement of railroad crossing approach ramps and road width allowances to allow for the safe crossing of large farm equipment and low clearance highway vehicles.
6. Enforcing the maintenance of line fences on existing railroads and along abandoned right-of-ways, pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 4959.02 (A), even when the railroad property is sold or transferred.
7. Ensuring vehicle traffic is not impeded by rail traffic at multiple intersections within the same area at the same time.
8. Effective placement of additional sidings and other infrastructure, the use of increased fines or other practices to limit impeding state routes, vital thoroughfares and emergency service routes by stopped trains.

Slow Moving Vehicles**244**

We support:

1. The use of safety lights and official SMV emblems as required in the Ohio Revised Code and approved by American Society of Agricultural Engineers (ASAE) on farm machinery, including all horse drawn vehicles used on public roadways.
2. Proper use of the Speed Indicator Symbol (SIS) for farm equipment designed to travel faster than 25 miles per hour.
3. Replacing all old-style farm machinery caution signs with the newer signs that include the SMV sign.
4. The inclusion of information on the SIS system signage and its meaning in drivers' education curriculum.

We oppose:

1. SMV signs being used for non-SMV purposes, such as driveway markers.

TRANSPORTATION**Highways****261**

We support:

1. The option of three-shift labor to expedite any contracted highway construction and repair project.

2. The use of alternative dust and ice control methods such as corn by-products, sand or limestone chips and reduce the use of salt, brine compounds and/or calcium chloride on federal, state, county and township highway systems in Ohio when feasible, to prevent contamination and long term effects on potable water used for drinking, livestock and irrigation.
3. Minimum sizing of roundabouts so as not to impede truck or farm equipment.
4. The state assuming responsibility for all bridges on the state highway system, regardless of location. ODOT should make the repair and replacement of bridges, including the resizing of bridges for drainage, a priority. We support the use of properly treated wood, especially poplar, in repairing or rebuilding of bridges 40 feet or less in length.
5. Revising the qualification standards specified in the Association of State Highway and Transportation manual so Ohio counties can benefit from grants and matching funds for road construction. Current standards are inappropriate for conditions in Ohio and make the construction cost prohibitive.
6. Existing roads and right of ways being used wherever possible for the construction of any proposed highways.
7. The positioning of mailboxes and newspaper boxes according to the Federal Postal Regulations and encourage placing them on the same side of the road. We support enforcement, by either the county engineer or county zoning inspector, of the minimum set back requirement where applicable for mail and paper boxes along state, county and township roads. If there is not a setback distance, then one should be established. We propose a standard three feet from the edge of the road setback for mailboxes to facilitate the movement of large equipment.
8. The widening of state, county and township road berms and the widening of overpasses during new construction or reconstruction. At minimum, berms should be returned to the width prior to construction. Access roads should remain open and be maintained until the project is complete.
9. The installation of rumble strips along the centerline and roadsides for state highways and maintaining fog lines on the edges of all paved roads.
10. A review of the current state funding formula for maintenance and repair of bridges on county roads. The state is responsible for prioritizing funding for projects (rather than the county) and the current formula penalizes counties that have a good bridge maintenance program.
11. A revision of the applicable funding formula to increase funds for counties and townships to maintain their roads and bridges.
12. Steps to get more semi-trucks to use the turnpike including, for example, a review of existing load limits and tolls.
13. The Ohio Department of Transportation revising their standards for headwater back up so that they do not cause flooding of farmland due to incorrectly sized, improperly installed, or poorly maintained culverts and drainage structures under roadbeds or within the road right-of-ways.
14. The Ohio Department of Transportation developing a culvert and ditch maintenance program published per county to allow for timely maintenance of right-of-way drainage.

15. The PUCO to regularly inspecting railroad crossings for deterioration and to have crossings maintained in a timely manner.
 16. Allowing a 25 percent weight variance for farm implements being towed by a licensed motorized vehicle.
 17. Allowing a 25 percent seasonal weight variance for farm equipment.
 18. Farm vehicles, including those hauling products and supplies on the farm, machinery and implements, be exempt from Ohio's weight laws, except for restrictions on bridges and frost law.
 19. The State of Ohio and all contiguous states to enter into a compact to recognize each state's commercial driver's license exemption.
 20. The State of Ohio maintaining fences along its highways, or, in the alternative, allow the landowners to remove a fence in disrepair.
 21. Identification signs being placed on all interstate overpasses designating the crossroads.
 22. Revisions of the highway axle limits utilizing the Federal Bridge Law and raising the legal gross weight for a commercial vehicle and or an agricultural vehicle to 92,000 pounds instead of 80,000 pounds taking into consideration the tire size and air pressure, not just axle weight.
 23. The ability of county engineers to establish road use maintenance agreements (RUMA) with entities developing and operating projects where heavy and repetitive loads impact road infrastructure.
 24. Giving counties the authority to designate reasonable primary travel routes for licensed, heavy vehicles traveling to and from permitted livestock facilities.
 25. Mandatory response from ODOT Permit Department within 30 days to confirm or deny any agricultural access permit application.
 26. County Farm Bureaus' involvement in the planning, location and development of the highway construction, development or expansion projects in their counties and regions.
 27. Ohio Farm Bureau working with Ohio Department of Transportation to promote projects deemed worthy by local Farm Bureaus.
 28. Requirements for the Ohio Department of Transportation to develop plans for the efficient transportation of agricultural commodities, supplies and equipment during periods of road construction and repair.
 29. ODOT moving quickly to implement planned projects to provide economic development opportunities to underserved areas, for example, southeastern Ohio where highway access is limited.
 30. Permit fees for overweight vehicles be limited to the cost of administration and provided on an equitable basis to all industries.
- We oppose:
1. The term "highway and road purposes" as used in Ohio Department of Transportation easements being altered to include use for commercial advertising or cellular phone towers.
 2. The privatization of the Ohio Turnpike.
 3. The change in designation of any roadway to limited access highway that would impede travel of farm equipment and/or access to fields.
 4. Inconsistent and excessive road bonding by local officials

All-Terrain Vehicles 262

- 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 operations.
 - 5 3. Proof of a safety-training course be required of an ATV operator.
 - 6 4. Legislation that requires one to obtain written permission from the landowner and
 - 7 show proof of insurance before being allowed to operate ATVs and snowmobiles on
 - 8 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 Driver's 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 local and regional
 - 3 jails without placing the burden on the local level.
 - 4 2. Greater consequences and support stiffer penalties for rural crimes including theft of
 - 5 property and the vandalism and/or destruction of crops or livestock.
 - 6 3. Increasing the penalty of theft of any precursor used to manufacture any illegal
 - 7 addictive substance from a misdemeanor to a felony, particularly when a minor is
 - 8 used to procure the substance. We also favor increasing funding for undercover
 - 9 investigations and drug task force agencies.
 - 10 4. The utilization and timely updating of state and national law enforcement databases to
 - 11 provide more comprehensive information on criminals and criminal activity.
 - 12 5. The rights of individuals to keep, bear and carry arms.
 - 13 6. The law enforcement policy of the U.S. Postal Inspection Service and local
 - 14 enforcement agency for anyone found guilty of intentionally damaging or destroying
 - 15 a public or private U.S. mailbox.
 - 16 7. Enforcing the litter laws to stop the littering of items that can be harmful to farm
 - 17 animals and machinery.
 - 18 8. Neighborhood watch programs.
 - 19 9. Statewide implementation of the MARCS radio system for law enforcement, EMS
 - 20 and Fire Departments.
 - 21 10. Federal, state and local cooperation to investigate and prosecute federal benefits fraud
 - 22 such as SNAP, Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) and Medicare/Medicaid.
 - 23 11. Farmers to report all fertilizer and chemical thefts and suspicious activities.
 - 24 12. Whenever possible, convicted offenders should be required to compensate victims for
 - 25 loss, damage or injury caused by their crime.

- 26 13. Parental financial responsibility for full payment of vandalism by minors
- 27 14. Law enforcement officials be required to facilitate the exchange of information
- 28 among those involved in an accident (i.e., name, address, insurance carrier, etc.).
- 29 15. Law enforcement officials be required to relay information concerning property
- 30 damage to the respective owner.
- 31 16. Law enforcement officials receive training on agricultural laws such as weight limits,
- 32 farm equipment safety, etc., that will meet the requirements of Continuing Education
- 33 Units for the officers.
- 34 17. Law enforcement programs that will help reduce and eliminate Ohio's opiate and
- 35 drug epidemic. The requirement that all pawnshops be required to participate and
- 36 report in the L.E.A.D.S. (Law Enforcement Automated Data System) online program
- 37 to help combat theft.
- 38 18. Adequate funding at state level for law enforcement to test the THC level in cannabis
- 39 plants to determine if they are marijuana or hemp.
- 40 19. Collaborative efforts to raise awareness and eliminate human and child trafficking

UTILITIES

Natural Gas

281

- 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 other
- 5 types of fuel gas resources.
- 6 4. Farm Bureaus' 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.
- 9 6. Requiring oil and gas production companies providing residential natural gas service
- 10 to notify customers on an annual basis regarding the status of their natural gas
- 11 service. This would allow landowners to make arrangements for alternative energy
- 12 supply should the service be interrupted.
- 13 7. Any company providing residential natural gas services to at least three homes be
- 14 regulated as a public utility.

Public Utilities

282

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The costs of service that can be identified as the result of poor management decisions
- 3 be assessed as a non-bypassable charge to the company, and not be paid by the
- 4 consumer in utility service fees.
- 5 2. Utility companies maintaining their utility cables or lines, including adequate heights
- 6 or depths. Maintenance should include clearing of impediments in right-of-ways to
- 7 maintain integrity and visibility of utility services.
- 8 3. As cable companies expand services, they be under the regulatory review of the
- 9 PUCO.

Telephone Service**283**

We support:

1. The cooperation of every telephone company in providing Extended Area Service (EAS) to contiguous exchanges and that EAS be made available to the county seat where subscribers express interest.
2. Minimum service requirements for the telephone industry include publishing easily readable company phone numbers to report service outages and damaged equipment as well as emergency and county government office numbers for further assistance in directories, internet websites and on poles/infrastructure.
3. The application, by rural communities, for extended local calling or similar type service where it is to the advantage of subscribers.
4. Rural subscribers' ability to receive the same quality of service (including access to Internet, long distance carriers and any other services).
5. The ability of all subscribers to call their county seat, local school, closest hospital and attending fire protection toll free.
6. The following safeguards and protections and believe they should remain in place while considering deregulation of the telephone industry:
 - a. Ensuring that all customers have access to reliable basic local telephone service at fair and reasonable prices
 - b. Required universal service or payment into a subsidy fund;
 - c. New entrants create local calling areas of equal to or greater size than those currently in place;
 - d. New entrants should respect current EAS agreements;
 - e. The integrity of 911 services should be maintained and upgraded by granting county commissioners discretionary authority to add a monthly charge to telephone bills; and
 - f. Directory assistance and written directories should be in a standardized format and published in 12 point font or larger.
7. Increased wireless service in rural areas.
8. Enhanced 911 services for cell phones, voice over internet protocol (VOIP), cable and emerging technologies, and the additional monthly charge to pay for the new technology.
9. Methods of controlling telemarketing and robocalls that include:
 - a. Individuals listed on the state do not call list should have the option of excluding calls from political organizations and/or candidates and
 - b. Prohibiting a telemarketer from blocking his/her name and number from caller ID.

We oppose:

1. The collection of zone charges by local telephone companies.

Water Supply**284**

We oppose:

1. Mandates for landowners to use a particular water supply.

Rural Broadband**285**

We support:

1. Increased access to high-speed Internet connections in rural areas, including wireless, that is reliable and price competitive.
2. Rural broadband initiatives, including federal funds or grants, in Ohio and recognize the increased economic development opportunities that come to rural areas with increased access.
3. Local government, education and business aggregation to increase demand for rural areas.
4. The formation of co-operatives to provide internet access.
5. The elimination of the local match requirement from state funding sources.
6. Disconnection of state funding from FCC coverage maps.
7. The formation of public-private partnerships to help plan, fund, regulate and maintain high-speed internet serving middle mile and last mile customers.
8. “To and through” initiatives to leverage existing middle-mile fiber (serving schools, libraries, and government offices) using wireless technologies to reach nearby households.
9. Extensions of 4G or higher to enable households with weak reception to receive a full-strength signal.
10. Establish an Ohio Broadband Authority and Regional Broadband Councils within the Ohio Broadband Office, to encourage honest and transparent reporting standards.
11. Incentivizing service providers willing to build into impoverished, low population density areas.
12. Non-traditional providers in deploying broadband including electric and telecommunications cooperatives.

SECTION 3: COMMODITIES

SECTION 3: COMMODITIES

ANIMAL CARE

Animal Care

301

We support:

1. Properly researched, veterinary approved and industry-tested poultry and livestock practices that provide consumers with a wholesome food supply;
2. The Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board (OLCSB) and its uniform set of standards governing the care and well-being of livestock in Ohio that maintains food safety, encourages locally grown and raised food and protects Ohio farms and families;
3. The Ohio Farm Bureau Federation having the privilege and the opportunity for constructive dialog with the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board (OLCSB) when member animal care concerns and issues differ from OLCSB standards.
4. Policies written by the Ohio Department of Agriculture concerning the Ohio Livestock Care Standards Board to protect livestock farmers from random inspections and that inspections be conducted only after a written and signed complaint is submitted by the person suspecting the violation;
5. A unified animal agriculture effort to educate the public concerning humane farming practices;
6. An aggressive, comprehensive educational program presenting the facts of livestock and poultry husbandry and production to elected officials, agencies, allied industries, youth and the general public;
7. A continued proactive approach to the livestock care debate in Ohio;
8. Education about the difference between the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and local humane animal agencies;
9. Development and delivery of programs to educate people about the differences between livestock animals and companion animals;
10. Legislation to update and revise laws pertaining to the operation of humane societies and the training of personnel;
11. Humane officers receive training on livestock care provided by livestock industry experts;
12. Oversight authority of any livestock including animal care and cruelty complaints rest with the Ohio Department of Agriculture and that all complaints of livestock abuse (excluding companion animals) be investigated and processed by the Ohio Department of Agriculture;
13. Livestock farmers become certified through their commodity organization's quality assurance program;
14. Judicious use of antibiotic drugs in livestock production. Any drug restrictions should be based only upon sound science and extensive research;
15. Development of state programs to increase large animal veterinarian and vet technician student enrollment and their continued work with food and fiber animals upon completion of their respective program;
16. Regulations governing the housing, care and movement of wild dangerous animals and restrictions on ownership;

17. The Ohio attorney general's office investigate animal rights organizations for false advertising; and
 18. Livestock be considered or classified as personal property.
 19. Continued research into medical procedures currently practiced within the livestock industry.
 20. Educational programs, including traveling programs, that include legally obtained native wildlife, domesticated farm animals and non-dangerous exotics used for community outreach programs.
 21. Amending the definition of "veterinarian client patient relationship" to include that such a relationship is established on a temporary basis in an emergency when using telemedicine technology, including through email, text, digital photos, or other digital means.
- We oppose:
1. Legislation and/or ballot initiatives that restricts the private ownership or use of livestock or that inhibits free trade of any livestock provided it meets Ohio Department of Agriculture testing and import requirements;
 2. The use of educational materials in our public schools that discourage use of animal products;
 3. The concept of animal "rights", the associated elevation of animal rights to those enjoyed by humans and the expenditure of public funds to promote the concept of animal rights;
 4. Legislation that establishes felony penalties of first time offenders for violations of animal cruelty law;
 5. Legislation that makes crimes against animals equal to or greater than similar crimes against people;
 6. Privately incorporated humane societies receiving money from fines for animal cruelty convictions;
 7. Local regulation of livestock care through county; township or municipal ordinance or ballot initiatives; and
 8. Ballot issues or legislation that will regulate livestock care, food product and other agriculture enterprise methods with no sound/proven science or accepted valid, unbiased research.

Bovidae, Camelidae and Cervidae

302

We support that bovidae, camelidae and cervidae being kept under agricultural farm conditions shall be considered livestock and are subject to the policies and regulations as they relate to livestock.

Companion Animals

303

We support:

1. Legislation requiring appropriate vaccination for all pets;
2. Increased education and coordination of local responses to prevent the spread of rabies including statewide rabies vaccinations of dogs; and
3. Reasonable regulation, inspection and licensing of kennels and businesses engaged in the commercial breeding and sale of pets.

We oppose:

1. Vet mandated vaccination programs except for rabies vaccinations which should be performed by a licensed veterinarian;

- 10 2. Any restrictions on any method of sale (including auction) of a companion animal;
- 11 and
- 12 3. Breed-specific legislation (BSL).

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 from
- 4 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 by
- 8 government;
- 9 4. The Ohio Department of Agriculture having the authority and funding necessary to
- 10 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 of
- 13 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 Agriculture
- 17 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 prescription
- 23 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 needed
- 3 for specialty agricultural production and exercise the authority granted to states for
- 4 registration of such pesticides.
- 5 2. All persons handling pesticides be educated of the dangers and follow all regulations
- 6 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 interregional
- 10 (IR4) program to handle the numerous requests for minor use pesticides registration
- 11 approvals. Where possible, similar crops/species should be tested, certified and
- 12 registered as a group.
- 13 5. The Ohio Department of Agriculture exert due diligence in making sure that Section
- 14 18 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) requests are

- 15 filed and approved in a timely manner, as farmers need to be advised of changes that
16 would affect the ability to use minor use pesticides in agricultural production.
- 17 6. The development of methyl bromide alternatives for Ohio growers.
- 18 7. Ohio Department of Agriculture to minimize the burden on landowners of pesticide
19 restrictions to protect endangered species.
- 20 8. An Ohio program for the return and proper disposal of outdated and unregistered
21 agricultural pesticides without cost or liability to the owner, ODA coordinating this
22 program and we support legislation to protect the ODA from legal liability for
23 providing this important service.
- 24 9. Further development and promotion of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) practices
25 in Ohio. IPM is a defensible use of pesticides because it focuses use where problems
26 have been identified.
- 27 10. OARDC to conduct more intensive research into alternative and traditional methods
28 of controlling emerging pest problems.
- 29 11. Fees be commensurate with services provided to maintain farmer access to Ohio
30 Department of Agriculture private pesticide licensing programs.
- 31 12. Strict adherence by applicators, either commercial or private, in following label and
32 application instructions to promote proper management and guard against liability.
- 33 13. Increased use of mini-bulk, eco-packs and other returnable and recyclable pesticide
34 containers in a variety of sizes.
- 35 14. The requirement that all people who apply chemicals or pesticides on residential,
36 commercial, or agricultural property have appropriate applicator certification for
37 restricted-use pesticides.
- 38 15. The continued efforts of OSU and chemical companies to assist in pesticide
39 certification training.
- 40 16. Efforts to maintain current state laws that provide some exemption for intrastate
41 movement of agricultural production materials from U.S. Department of
42 Transportation regulations on transportation of hazardous materials.
- 43 17. Ohio State University to actively complete Ohio crop profiles detailing actual
44 pesticide use and potential economical alternatives for use by the U.S. Environmental
45 Protection Agency as it implements the Food Quality Protection Act.
- 46 18. Ohio and farmer participation in the Drift Watch, Ohio Sensitive Crop Registry or
47 similar programs to protect chemical sensitive crops, bees and other pollinators.
- 48 19. Applicator awareness of sensitive crops and registered apiaries before applying
49 insecticides and herbicides so they may take measures to avoid pesticide drift.
- 50 20. Incorporating more effective transportation safety education/outreach information and
51 training opportunities in Ohio Department of Agriculture pesticide certification and
52 other local training programs for farmers.
- 53 We oppose:
- 54 1. Additional legislation or regulations requiring applicators to give prior notice of
55 proposed pesticide applications.
- 56 2. Non-affected parties having the right to bring suit or injunction against pesticide users
57 for possible misuse of chemicals.
- 58 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 use
- 3 of such additives and deterrents.

COMMODITIES**Livestock****321**

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. An agricultural business climate that promotes the livestock industry and ensures the
- 3 opportunity for the livestock industry to remain viable in Ohio;
- 4 2. All farmers to become more engaged in positively promoting and creating awareness
- 5 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 4. The Livestock Care Standards Board should consider establishing standards allowing
- 9 tail docking for dairy beef cattle raised for meat production based on but not limited
- 10 to the size of the animal, the management system, and a veterinary client patient
- 11 relationship.
- 12 We oppose any attempt to reduce the current animal number threshold for livestock
- 13 facility permitting, however, we believe the regulating agencies should adopt regulations for
- 14 livestock facilities not solely based on these levels, but devise a formula considering factors
- 15 such as:
- 16 1. The number of animals;
- 17 2. Method of farm management (feed lot, managed grazing);
- 18 3. Water Usage (ground or surface supply); and
- 19 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 dairy
- 4 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 milk
- 14 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 eliminated;

7. Improved minimum health and food safety standards for fluid milk based on sound science;
 8. Changing the zero tolerance to negligible risk;
 9. Research, development and economic enhancements to promote the capabilities of Ohio's dairy industry in identifying and capturing greater export and niche markets;
 10. Dairy farmers' proportional representation be maintained on the Milk Sanitation Board;
 11. Efforts to revise milk inspection regulations to make the penalties for antibiotic contaminated milk more closely reflect the degree of the infraction. If an infraction occurs, the sample in question must be held for seven days to allow for further testing;
 12. All dairy farmers to consider participating in the Cooperatives Working Together (CWT) program;
 13. The Ohio Department of Agriculture and/or departments of health to effectively enforce the regulations dealing with the refrigeration of dairy products at the retail and institutional level, including schools;
 14. All imitation dairy products being labeled imitation.
- We oppose:
1. The concept of "pool-riding" and other pricing strategies whereby farmers from different marketing orders circumvent the intended function of the milk marketing orders to gain an unfair pricing advantage;
 2. All forms of misleading advertising that suggest or imply an imitation product contains a natural dairy product;
 3. The importation of milk protein concentrates, ultra-filtered milk and casein that are not subject to dairy tariff rate quotas consistent with World Trade Organization rules; and
 4. The sale of raw milk directly to consumers without proper regulations in place to ensure the highest level of food safety.

Equine

323

- We support:
1. Equine continue to be defined and recognized as livestock;
 2. Ohio's equine industry to communicate with other commodity groups and to cooperatively work together;
 3. Development and establishment of an equine promotion and marketing program for the state of Ohio. Such a program should include representation from all segments of Ohio's equine industry;
 4. Ohio Department of Agriculture's Statistics Service to obtain and include equine data in its annual report as it does for all other species of livestock;
 5. Education of elected officials, agencies and allied industries pertaining to equine related issues and urge an economic impact study, including a census of equine;
 6. Development of humane equine processing and rendering facilities in Ohio;
 7. Increasing the number of and the quality of equestrian riding trails on local metro, state and federal land;
 8. Legislation that provides additional revenue from Ohio's pari-mutuel and related 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 the
- 19 pari-mutuel and video lottery terminal taxes collected;
- 20 11. OSU Extension's Regional Equine Information Network Systems (REINS) program;
- 21 12. Recognizing the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) as the voice
- 22 of Ohio's equine industry; and
- 23 13. The Ohio Racing Commission continue to allocate funds to the agricultural
- 24 component of the racing industry.

Aquaculture 324

- 1 We support the Ohio Department of Agriculture to promote and oversee the aquaculture
- 2 industry, including processing.

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 bushels
- 3 per year.

Grain Indemnity 327

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Legislation that keeps any funds and interest earned intended for the grain indemnity
- 3 fund from being diverted into state general revenue funds;
- 4 2. Additional funding for increased inspection and compliance efforts within the grain
- 5 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 sampling
- 3 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 and
- 3 maintain samples for the purpose of seed piracy reporting and enforcement and

2. Any law that would involve the Ohio Department of Agriculture in policing seed partner agreements.

Grains and Oilseeds Marketing

330

We support:

1. Members to utilize component pricing opportunities and
2. Improvements to the delivery system to the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) that support a more uniform convergence of cash grain and CME values.

Grazing Lands

331

We support

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

Greenhouse and Specialty Crops

332

We support:

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

Honey and Bees

333

We support:

1. Counties to make sure there is adequate support for county bee inspection programs that includes training for inspectors;
2. Independent contractors acting as bee inspectors within the counties;
3. The increase of public awareness, educational programs for beekeepers and inspectors, and research by The Ohio State University to improve the population, health and productivity of the honeybee, including breeding and other techniques to improve resistance to mites, hive beetles and diseases detrimental to honeybees;
4. The Ohio Department of Agriculture to increase state funding to educate farmers and individuals on beekeeping to encourage more Ohioans to become involved in beekeeping and to raise awareness;
5. Ohio Department of Agriculture to maintain an apiary section capable of serving the issues facing the industry including inspection of out of state commercial bees and bee hives, enforcing current code sections and addressing industry challenges;
6. Making changes to Ohio Revised Code to allow Ohio Department of Agriculture to determine and assess fees for the Ohio apiary program;
7. Multiple funding mechanisms to increase beekeeping opportunities in the state;
8. The development of an improved insurance product for the apiary industry that will cover foreseeable risks at a reasonable cost;

- 20 9. Implementation of the findings of the 2010 Ohio Honey Bee Task Force;
- 21 10. ODA, Ohio EPA, US EPA and other licensing agencies to apply scientific research
- 22 when approving chemical use that may adversely affect bee health;
- 23 11. Specific education efforts should be focused towards pesticide applicators in an effort
- 24 to mitigate the risk of pesticide product application that may be harmful to honey
- 25 bees; and
- 26 12. ODA maintain an identification numbering system for beekeepers that is capable of
- 27 tracking disease and parasite issues.

Maple Syrup

334

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Additional research at the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center and
- 3 The Ohio State University on sweet tree seed and control of parasites and disease on
- 4 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
- 10 5. Recognizing sugar bushes as part of a wood lot management plan to maintain
- 11 eligibility for CAUV.
- 12 6. The collection of verifiable data about the size and scope of Ohio's Maple industry.
- 13 Individual producers should be able to report anonymously, and all individual
- 14 information should be protected. We encourage all maple producers to participate in
- 15 survey and data collection of production in order to support the Ohio Maple
- 16 industry's continued growth.

Timber

335

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The Ohio Division of Forestry in promoting educational efforts for timber marketing
- 3 programs, workshops, articles, and the Call Before You Cut program, that serve
- 4 private woodland landowners with the goal of protecting landowners from making
- 5 poor marketing decisions, supporting the forest products industry, and increasing
- 6 quality timber production in Ohio.
- 7 2. Utilizing State Service Foresters and professional consulting foresters in assisting and
- 8 supporting landowners in making educated timber marketing decisions.
- 9 3. Funding for the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the Ohio Department of
- 10 Agriculture for identifying, detecting, monitoring, treating, and providing control
- 11 methods for and education about forest pests deemed to be detrimental to the timber
- 12 resources of Ohio.
- 13 4. All owners of timberlands have a Forest Management Plan written by a qualified
- 14 forester.
- 15 5. All property boundaries are properly located and marked prior to conducting a timber
- 16 sale.
- 17 6. Stronger enforcement of criminal trespass laws in order to prevent timber theft.

7. Farmers and woodland owners utilizing a Timber Harvest Notice of Intent (NOI) approved by their local Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors, with the technical support of the ODNR Division of Forestry, or qualified consulting foresters prior to conducting a timber harvest to ensure that Best Management Practices for Logging (BMP's) be implemented on all timber sales.
8. Utilization of a Timber Sale Contract that insures that the minimum basic standards for silviculture, best management practices for logging, economic protection, and protection of both the Seller and Buyer as recommended by the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry;
9. The Ohio Forestry Association, ODNR Division of Forestry, and the Loggers Standard Council in their efforts to maintain, monitor, and enhance the Master Logger Program to improve safety and ensure loggers follow Best Management Practices (BMPs).
10. The creation of forestry demonstration areas on state, private, or municipal lands that show the environmental and economic benefits and desired impacts that sound silvicultural practices have on forests, wildlife, and people.
11. Division of Forestry owned state forests stay under the management of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry.
12. The sustainable harvesting of timber on state-owned lands.
13. The use of EQIP funds originating in the Farm Bill and distributed through the USDA and NRCS Offices to forest landowners to enhance the environment and the timber resources of Ohio.
14. Legislation that would require sawmills to document purchases, provide those records to law enforcement upon request, and prohibit sawmills from purchasing logs from known timber thieves.

We oppose:

1. Zoning restrictions and municipal ordinances that inhibit or prohibit sustainable timber harvesting on private or public lands.

Tobacco

336

We support:

1. The State of Ohio Administration and General Assembly to include provisions for tobacco farms in future settlements with tobacco companies;
2. The State of Ohio Administration and General Assembly reinstating the funding for the Southern Ohio Agricultural and Community Development Foundation (SOACDF);
3. The SOACDF Board of Trustees in their investment of funds in agricultural development, educational assistance and economic development;
4. Continuation and restructuring of the burley tobacco grower's co-op to meet the changing needs of burley tobacco growers.
5. Inclusion of an Ohio Tobacco grower or growers' interest on the Council for Burley Tobacco.

- 13 We oppose:
- 14 1. Litigation allowing tobacco farmers to become a party to lawsuits aimed at recovering
- 15 damages claimed due to use of tobacco products.

Marijuana 337

- 1 We oppose the cultivation and sale of marijuana in the state of Ohio for recreational use.
- 2 The following principles and considerations must be addressed as part of any legalization of
- 3 marijuana in the state of Ohio: funding for addiction/treatment programs, tax structure,
- 4 exclusion from the Constitution, no monopoly structure, use of sound science and research, a
- 5 strong regulatory system, federal reclassification, workplace regulation, grow sites and
- 6 appropriate access.

Industrial Hemp 338

- 1 We Support:
- 2 1. The production, processing, commercialization and utilization of industrial hemp and
- 3 that it be regulated by USDA rather than the Drug Enforcement Administration
- 4 (DEA).
- 5 2. Legislation to amend the Controlled Substance Act to exclude industrial hemp.

Wineries, Craft Brewing, Craft Distilling 339

- 1 We support the growth of the Ohio craft brewing, distilling and winemaking industry that
- 2 supports the purchase of Ohio agricultural products. This includes support in lobbying,
- 3 marketing, financing, insuring and securing energy supplies and adequate research and
- 4 development funds.

COMMODITY INSPECTION

Inspection Programs 341

- 1 We support state and federal commodity inspection agencies to periodically review
- 2 prerequisites and qualifications of all personnel involved in inspection and certification and
- 3 require 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 interstate
- 3 trade;
- 4 2. The reclassification of domestically raised meat rabbits as an amenable species for
- 5 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 that
- 10 maintains food safety standards;
- 11 6. The Ohio Department of Agriculture meat inspectors be trained so that inspections
- 12 will be uniform;

7. No penalty be assessed for violations during a reasonable training period for new employees;
8. Ohio Department of Agriculture State Meat Inspection to allow more flexibility during the slaughter process of animals for inspectors to recognize that every attempt is being made to be in compliance with the law and that no violation exists when a second shot or stun method is immediately employed;
9. The ability of producers to sell domestically raised rabbits harvested at a state inspected facility in any wholesale or retail market within the state; and
10. All animals harvested in a state inspected plant be afforded the same inspection and cost whether amenable or non-amenable. This privilege should not apply to wild game animals.
11. Adequate funding for the state meat inspection programs to cover the needs of the industry and promote growth and diversity amongst our livestock processing facilities across Ohio.

FOOD SAFETY

Food Quality and Safety

351

We support:

1. Regulatory agencies that have jurisdiction over our food supply have a coordinated plan so they can respond quickly to give assurance that the U.S. food supply is wholesome and nutritious and with timely availability to all consumers;
2. Statements and decisions by state and national government officials be based on scientific fact rather than emotional appeals;
3. A change from zero tolerance to negligible risk;
4. Promoting and educating the public, media, retailers, food service employees and others on how to use sanitary practices in the handling and preparation of food;
5. The Ohio Produce Marketing Agreement Initiative;
6. Additional funding to continue the Ohio State University Extension Good Agricultural Practices Project in Ohio;
7. The development of cost effective third party fresh produce audit verification programs to meet market place demands;
8. Resources be developed to assist members in complying with third party audit certification requirements;
9. Maintaining separate food safety regulations for honey, maple syrup and sorghum;
10. ODNR considering the effect of animal intrusion on food safety when establishing seasons, bag limits, issuing nuisance permits; and
11. Producer education and training on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) to intelligently discuss and answer consumer questions on food safety.

We oppose:

1. Farmers being required to certify that no chemical residue is present on food products sold at retail.

Food Labeling

352

Agricultural products that are produced using approved biotechnology should not be required to designate individuals' inputs or specific technologies on the product label.

We support the Ohio Department of Agriculture requiring all food labels in the state be able to substantiate their claims through sound scientific testing.

We oppose all use of false and misleading statements on labels, promotional materials or other advertising for food or beverage products.

We oppose the use of the term “meat” on labels of products that comes from any alternative protein such as soy-based, vegetable-based, synthetic protein, lab cultured cells, and other sources.

Farm and Farmers’ Markets

353

We support:

1. Working with the Ohio Department of Agriculture and Ohio Department of Health to monitor enforcement of the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code and other food safety regulations, as they apply to farm markets, roadside stands and other farmers retailing, processing, or distributing food.
2. Recommending technical corrections to the Ohio Revised Code to assure the consistent enforcement of the Ohio Uniform Food Safety Code and other food safety regulations related to public health issues.
3. Working with other interested parties to address insurance, zoning and other regulatory compliance issues that impact the viability of Ohio direct agricultural marketing.
4. Creating consistent tiers of inspection fees at farmer’s markets for meat, poultry and eggs.
5. The definition of a farm market as a market where fifty percent or more of the gross income received from the market is derived from product raised on farms owned or operated by the market operator in a normal year.
6. The current exemption of farm markets from township and county zoning.
7. The continued equitable government funding of the W.I.C. Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program and the Senior Nutrition Program as beneficial programs for Ohio agriculture and Ohio citizens.
8. Expanding the Senior Coupon/Voucher program to all Ohio counties for obtaining produce from participating local farmers.
9. Improving the ability for farmer’s markets and individual vendors to accept electronic benefit transfer (EBT) programs and food coupons; and
10. Statewide legislation to standardize local health department requirements regarding sale of agricultural products.

We oppose

1. Local governments exceeding state regulations on farmer’s markets.

CONTRACTING

Bargaining Contract Marketing

361

We support amendments to the Ohio Agricultural Contract Marketing Law to accomplish the following:

1. A more equitable means of resolving processor-farmer disputes. This type of change should include the elimination or extension of the March 31 bargaining deadline and provide for mediation;

- 6 2. Mandatory deductions and forwarding of agricultural association member dues made
- 7 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:

- 2 1. Working with the Ohio Grocers Association to ensure that consumers have access to
- 3 a reasonable variety of local and Ohio food products and that our farmer members
- 4 have a market for their products.
- 5 2. The creation and development of food hubs, commercial incubator kitchens and
- 6 related organizations.

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 and its support of veterans programs.
- 7 4. The ability of a check-off program to make organizational or administrative changes
- 8 to the program with the approval of the Director of the Department of Agriculture.

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

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

Livestock Marketing and Processing

373

1 We support:

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

- 8 5. Incentives for new meat processing facilities.
- 9 6. Providing more training opportunities and communication for meat inspection
- 10 requirements including Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP)
- 11 training.

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 by
- 5 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 agricultural
- 8 markets and develop and enhance awareness of risk management tools;
- 9 4. Entities that identify and support farmer owned businesses that will produce value-
- 10 added products from agricultural commodities;
- 11 5. Alternative methods of commodity marketing that take advantage of innovative
- 12 techniques;
- 13 6. The creation of value-added agricultural facilities;
- 14 7. The rights of farmers to gain access to markets through equity ownership of
- 15 processing plants and other marketing opportunities; and
- 16 8. The continued state funding of the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbank to
- 17 utilize surplus and imperfect Ohio farm products to feed needy Ohioans.

Agritourism

375

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Agritourism and its viability in Ohio;
- 3 2. The Ohio Revised Code definition of agritourism and its uniform application; and
- 4 3. Education and outreach efforts to assist local government officials in understanding
- 5 agritourism.

New Uses for Agricultural Products

376

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

2. Fair boards to place more emphasis on agricultural education and agricultural youth activities at their respective fairs;
3. The continued efforts for promotion of farm products, including new and specialized products, featured at the Ohio State Fair;
4. Long-term review of the Ohio Expo Center grounds as a facility that hosts the Ohio State Fair and many other Agriculture related events.
5. Additional funding for local junior fairs as administered through the Ohio Department of Agriculture budget;
6. Strong measures by 4-H, FFA, Fair Boards and the Ohio Department of Agriculture to prevent and discourage livestock tampering and promote good animal husbandry at livestock shows, provide quality assurance training for market animal youth exhibitors and refocus these programs on their original educational purpose. This should also include development and communication of a strong code of ethics;
7. Legislation that would prevent a board of county commissioners from reducing or diminishing any interest of a county or independent agricultural society without the consent of the affected agricultural society;
8. That the Ohio Department of Agriculture, not the State of Ohio Auditor's office, do the auditing of county fair boards;
9. County, independent and state fairs to adopt the use of electronic identification (EID) tags;
10. Ohio fairs developing biosecurity plans to address human and animal health and safety;
11. County fair boards and sale committees to accept the highest fair market value bid for market livestock projects.

SECTION 4: PROPERTY RIGHTS & TAXES

SECTION 4: PROPERTY RIGHTS & TAXES

INDEMNITY

Indemnification 401

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The continuation of the Ohio Department of Agriculture's indemnification program
- 3 for losses of agricultural products when products are impounded, farms are
- 4 quarantined, or movement or sales are restricted in the public's interest;
- 5 2. Indemnification programs be fully funded;
- 6 3. Farmers being promptly and fairly compensated;
- 7 4. Any indemnification fund that is paid for by farmers to only being used to protect
- 8 farmer losses.
- 9 We oppose farmers being held responsible for conditions beyond their control.

Dog Laws and Livestock Indemnity Claims 402

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Farm Bureaus working with their county government to promote better understanding
- 3 and emphasize enforcement of Ohio's dog law;
- 4 2. The reinstatement and full funding of the indemnity fund for damage from dogs,
- 5 black vultures and coyote kills;
- 6 3. The indemnity be adequate to replace the loss with a similar commercial animal of
- 7 like breeding, age and condition;
- 8 4. Close cooperation between dog wardens and wildlife officers in processing dog, black
- 9 vulture and coyote indemnity claims;
- 10 5. Livestock farmers carrying adequate insurance to cover loss of unusually valuable
- 11 animals;
- 12 6. Financial incentive programs focusing on the prevention of animal control problems
- 13 rather than their effects;
- 14 7. County dog wardens recognizing milk, meat, or fiber producing exotic animals as
- 15 livestock when paying indemnity claims;
- 16 8. The development of a mandatory credible training program for all animal control
- 17 officers that specializes in dog laws, the identification of damage inflicted by wildlife
- 18 and domestic animals to livestock and that clearly determines what constitutes animal
- 19 abuse, neglect and cruelty;
- 20 9. Stronger dog laws, which give dog wardens, and/or judges more options and the
- 21 necessary authority to appropriately deal with domestic dogs that have killed or
- 22 caused production loss of livestock.

PROPERTY RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Eminent Domain

411

We support:

1. The condemning agency being required to first establish the need for the project by using cost/benefit analysis and availability of capital funds for the project;
2. Funds should be made available to the landowner for an appeal process before condemning the land;
3. All necessary economic impact studies and environmental impact studies, etc. be completed prior to initiating condemnation. Any damage occurring should be reimbursed to the landowner;
4. The broadening of the definition of 'public notice' for ODOT construction projects to facilitate as much local input as practical;
5. All land in a corridor that the state has publicly identified for a projected state highway project must be purchased within three years of identification of the corridor, or, if not, all the restrictions on the property must expire. Landowners should be compensated 10 percent of the fair market value of the land if a proposed project is delayed for a period of 18 months or more;
6. Municipalities being limited in their use of condemnation proceedings to secure land and facilities outside of the municipal corporation;
7. Government entities compensating the landowner for loss of use of their land and for any profits realized on resale of land and landowner surrendered mineral rights taken by eminent domain;
8. Landowners of property taken by eminent domain to be compensated at prevailing market rates, including best alternate uses, established before the threat of eminent domain is publicly known;
9. The previous landowner owner and adjacent landowners having a right of first refusal to purchase the property if the original public use of property taken by eminent domain is abandoned;
10. Legislation that allows conservation easements to supersede eminent domain;
11. Legislation limiting the government's right of quick take to emergency actions only.

We oppose:

1. Government entities taking prime farmland for public purposes, including but not limited to public water supplies, public utilities, pipelines, highways, metropolitan parks, linear parks, wildlife areas and trails. Where such facilities are needed for the public welfare, the government entity should:
 - a. Purchase land areas from willing sellers when possible;
 - b. Assume all legal responsibilities and tax obligations for the property acquired by eminent domain, for example CAUV recoupment and penalties associated with USDA conservation contracts;
 - c. Compensate farmers and other landowners and leaseholders for property taken and right of ways/easements, inconvenience suffered, costs of new survey and creating new parcel number if separated from the original tract and for damage that may occur to them and to nearby property owners;

- 42 d. Determination of compensation should be made prior to project initiation, except
- 43 for true cases of public exigency;
- 44 e. Limit wellhead protection requirements for municipal water sources to real case
- 45 scenarios - for example, light sandy soils;
- 46 f. Pay for capital costs caused by wellhead protection ordinances;
- 47 g. Replace water supplies at no cost to the landowner for as long as the landowner
- 48 has a need for water; and
- 49 h. Mitigate adverse effects to adjoining property owners for any facility that may be
- 50 developed.
- 51 2. The practice of eminent domain for private development purposes;
- 52 3. Metropolitan parks and/or park districts using eminent domain for recreational
- 53 purposes. If eminent domain is to be used outside the “base county” of the Metro
- 54 Park and/or park district, the county commissioners in that outside county must
- 55 approve the eminent domain action.

Railroad and Canal Land Abandonment

412

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

8 We support:

- 9 1. Abandoned railroad crossings on township and county roads be restored to proper
- 10 grade;
- 11 2. Abandoned railroad property be disposed of within two years after the rails are
- 12 removed;
- 13 3. Land surveys being conducted of all abandoned railroad property whenever the real
- 14 estate is transferred. The railroad company should pay cost of survey;
- 15 4. Class-action litigation filed on behalf of landowners adjacent to abandoned railroad
- 16 lines against railroads that have used the railroad lines for utility easements in
- 17 contravention of the landowners’ property rights;
- 18 5. Legislation reforming adverse possession over abandoned railroad corridors and
- 19 canals, including, but not limited to, shortening the statute of limitations, and
- 20 changing evidentiary standard to preponderance of the evidence;
- 21 6. Legislation protecting landowners from eminent domain after being forced to
- 22 successfully defend ownership of abandoned railroad corridor or canal.

Bicycle, Recreational, Equine, Greenway and Water Trails

413

1 When abandoned rail lines or other areas are converted into bicycle, recreational, equine,
 2 greenway and water trails, landowners’ rights should be protected.

3 We support:

- 4 1. The following concerns being addressed:
- 5 a. The cost of adequate fencing, if desired by the adjoining landowner, be borne by
- 6 the developer;

- b. Satisfactory law enforcement and security;
 - c. Safety of both the users and landowners;
 - d. Local government expense, including maintenance;
 - e. Protection of adjoining landowners from liability to trespassers;
 - f. Trespassing and littering;
 - g. Provision for parking facilities at various locations;
 - h. Proper drainage is maintained; and
 - i. Landowners maintain access via an easement when trails bisect property;
 - j. Adequate signage including access points and private property designation.
2. The use of voluntary incentive-based programs for the creation and management of trails and greenways;
 3. The adoption of legislation that requires the trail developer to maintain fences, provide drainage and control weeds as required of railroads in Chapter 4959 of the Ohio Revised Code. Between the time of abandonment of the railroad line and construction of the trail, the adjoining landowner should be allowed to use the abandoned railroad easement;
 4. The adoption of legislation that requires that the integrity of the location of the railroad line be maintained during development of the trail.

We oppose:

1. The development of bicycle, recreational trails and greenways when the purpose is, in whole or part, to facilitate the annexation of additional tracts of land;
2. Legislation that denies or postpones any reversionary property rights or interest of property owners adjacent to railroad, utility, or road right-of-ways that are abandoned for any reason; and
3. The use of public monies for the construction, improvement, expansion and maintenance of recreational trails.
4. Trail expansion until such a time that groups, such as Rails-to-Trails and park districts, can prove necessity through a cost analysis of the economic impact of trail expansions on agricultural activities versus the economic benefit of trail expansion for the local community.

Utility Easements

414

We support:

1. Utility easements follow existing corridors whenever possible to protect landowners' rights and preserve important farmland;
2. Utilities being responsible for damages occurring on landowners' property including subsurface drainage systems;
3. Legislation that would require public or private utility companies to post a monetary bond or a cash deposit with the county before they are allowed to install underground utility lines in the county to pay for right-of-way restoration (i.e. tile, driveways, grade, etc.) Property damaged by the utility should be repaired to original condition;
4. Responsible disposal of tree debris after clearing by the utilities;
5. All new buried utility lines be located at a minimum depth of 5 feet, or a mutually agreed upon depth and that the property owner be notified five days prior to actual installation;

6. Open dialogue between local public utilities, community leaders, businesses, interstate pipeline companies and government agencies to ensure the proper planning and development of local and interstate pipelines to serve growing communities;
 7. Approval by the appropriate local political subdivision being required before a rural utility service can assess individual property owners;
 8. When a public utility plans to procure easements and/or utilize existing easements, said public utility shall notify the affected landowner by certified mail no later than 30 days prior to the date of the first public hearing;
 9. Any proposed utility project being required to address the real need and the actual environmental issues, including but not limited to: disturbance of watersheds, tillage and drainage systems, crop production loss, safety aspects including proximity to homes and buildings; devaluation of property values, disturbance of wetlands, and USDA conservation contracts.
 10. When a pipeline is approved, the pipeline company being required to follow the agricultural mitigation provisions prepared by the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts. This requirement and other restrictions should be clearly stated in an easement agreement between the pipeline company and the landowners;
 11. The law allowing the easement to be cancelled with proper notice and process when the original use of a utility easement is completed,
 12. The timely removal of any abandoned or obsolete utility equipment by the company.
- We oppose:
1. Landowners or tenants being liable for any damage to underground or above ground utilities that arise from normal farming practices;
 2. Broader interpretation of existing right of way easements that allows utilities to expand their access without proper compensation for property damage to the landowners.

Property Ownership Responsibility

- We support: **415**
1. Public landowners of real property including ODNR and other state government agencies should be held to the same responsibilities, rules and laws as private landowners.
 2. Requiring adjoining owners be notified of changes in property lines under new surveys;
 3. The voluntary use of written leases in compliance with Ohio law when entering into agreements to lease farmland.
 4. Legislation that would provide for a termination date and notification process to be complied with in the event there is no written lease between tenant and landlord, or in the event there is no relevant termination provision in a written lease.

Drainage

416

- We support:
1. County governments keeping agricultural interests at the forefront when considering any drainage projects and to consider the economic loss to farmers when drainage ditches are not cleaned and maintained;
 2. The fundamental right of all farmers to improve their lands for crop production;

- 6 3. The current drainage law being comprehensively reviewed and amended to address
7 the following concerns:
 - 8 a. Require county government to clean or establish a drainageway system to ensure
9 roadway waters and their associated pollutants and biohazards are directed away
10 from agricultural commodities that may be affected.
 - 11 b. Require a neighboring property owner, public utility or highway to provide access
12 to subsurface drainage outlets in accordance with Natural Resources Conservation
13 Service (NRCS) recommendations.
 - 14 c. Require governmental authorities granting building permits and private entities
15 developing land should analyze the impact on neighboring property owners and
16 work cooperatively with neighboring property owners to address drainage
17 concerns;
 - 18 d. Require the installation of drainage facilities which meet Natural Resources
19 Conservation Service guidelines and which minimize the adverse impact on
20 neighboring property.
 - 21 e. Provide the opportunity for property owners to collect compensation (plus
22 attorney fees and costs of the lawsuit) for any damages to a drainage system,
23 including those caused by an increase in the flow of surface water or a change in
24 the drainage pattern from a neighboring property.
 - 25 f. Prohibit all development (residential, commercial, industrial, etc.) and any
26 developers from adding more flow to agricultural land drainage systems without
27 paying for needed improvements and long-term maintenance fees.
 - 28 g. Protect and prevent the destruction of existing underground drainage systems and
29 require those responsible for the damage of tile lines to repair lines and pay
30 damages.
 - 31 h. Establish a program to mark/record tile placement; and
 - 32 i. Enable county subdivision regulations to require drainage access for new lot
33 splits.
- 34 4. A uniform statewide plan of action for petition ditches to ensure proper maintenance
35 and easements. This includes providing for an easement on new residential
36 developments with county ditches running through them. A ditch survey, conducted
37 by the Soil and Water Conservation District or the county engineer, should be
38 accepted by either party in the event a ditch project moves from one jurisdiction to
39 the other, whether a cooperative or petition ditch;
- 40 5. Requiring the recording of petition ditch easements so that they may be discovered
41 during property title searches;
- 42 6. Farmers using cooperative agreements on ditches whenever possible;
- 43 7. Any easement taken for drainage improvements be strictly limited to drainage
44 improvements and maintenance and no other purposes;
- 45 8. Funding be available for all open and subsurface drainage practices and log jam
46 removal when such practices will control soil erosion or result in other environmental
47 benefits;
- 48 9. State, county and municipal engineers work with property owners and soil and water
49 conservation districts where road drainage ties in with farm drainage;
- 50 10. All units of government be required to maintain ditches and tile on their property,
51 which drains the land of adjacent property owners;

11. Establishing a universally recognized sign to mark tiles at road crossings and property boundaries. Placement of signs would be at the landowner's expense and option;
 12. Landowners being notified when maintained drainageway maintenance is going to occur. We encourage landowners to mark tile outlets in ditches to avoid damage by mowers. Individuals, utilities and/or government agencies responsible for destroying marked tiles would be liable for restoration under appropriate agency supervision;
 13. Landowners being responsible for both surface and subsurface drainage project costs in direct proportion to their acres that drain into the project;
 14. Programs be developed to educate landowners about drainage laws through real estate transactions;
 15. When the state or county highway departments replace a culvert or small bridge over a dry run, the subsurface farm drainage tile that crosses under the highway at the same location should also be included in the project. Such tile should be replaced with highway grade tubing or concrete culvert. The length of the replacement should be the greater of the highway right of way or the project area;
 16. All maintained drainageways, county maintained or otherwise, be classified as "modified" or "historically channelized" maintained drainageways to retain their purpose of farm drainage and not be considered a navigable waterway subject to biological and recreational use designations;
 17. The ODA Division of Soil and Water Conservation in its efforts to meet Ohio's rural drainage challenges. This is an organized effort which consists of two parts: (1) Analyzing Ohio's drainage infrastructure needs and solutions and (2) Development of "Maintained Drainageway" Best Management Practice (BMP) Manual for maintenance and construction;
 18. Increased adoption of innovative ditch geometry practices and the provision of incentives to adopt such practices;
 19. A better method to quantify the costs and benefits of a maintained drainageway in the petition ditch law;
 20. Efforts to streamline the petition ditch process;
 21. The adjustment for inflation of the 20% ditch maintenance fee for ditches;
 22. Sellers of land in amounts below 20 acres be required to disclose drainage patterns and problems at the time of sale.
- We oppose:
1. Unreasonable regulations or legislation that unduly restricts the drainage of agricultural lands without basis in sound science.

Adverse Possession

417

- We support:
1. An additional element to adverse possession that requires a person claiming land by adverse possession to prove that he/she paid the taxes on the disputed property during the time that he/she claims to have possessed the land adversely;
 2. More clearly defining what constitutes adverse possession of land.

Trespassing**418**

We support:

1. Legislation to increase criminal penalties and establish a mandatory fine and full restitution of property damaged by individuals found guilty of trespassing and unauthorized activities;
2. Legislation to clearly spell out landowners' rights as they relate to trespassers and provide landowners immunity from civil liability in connection with injury, death or loss to trespassers;
3. Local law enforcement prosecution of trespassers;
4. Legislation that may provide for seizure of implements used in trespass, such as all-terrain vehicles, snowmobiles and vehicles and for an allowance of the collection of damages that would be multiplied for remuneration;
5. Legislation that strengthens "attractive nuisance laws" so as not to put landowners at risk for unreasonable lawsuits;
6. When performing a boundary survey, the surveyor should be able to enter adjacent private property as long as written notice is provided to adjacent landowners at least two days in advance and the surveyor pays for any damages caused on the adjacent properties;
7. Legislation prohibiting the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) over private property without the property owner's permission especially in the scenario where the UAV is intending to survey or gather data.
8. Legislation establishing the use of purple paint to mark land boundaries as an additional mechanism that will give notice to potential trespassers for purposes of appropriate trespass enforcement.

Cemeteries**419**

We support:

1. The real property laws now in place, which keep a closed private cemetery where there have been no burials in 75 years the size and status it is today.

We oppose:

1. Any legislation that would require private landowners to obtain permits to cultivate or disturb ground where ancient burial grounds are suspected or confirmed to be located, or would require landowners to fund excavation or relocation of discovered remains.

Homeland Security**420**

We support:

1. The protection of individual rights and property rights when affected by Homeland Security issues.

We oppose:

1. The mandatory use of social security numbers as a means of identification unless authorized under the Right to Privacy Act of 1974.

LAND USE

Land Use Planning

431

We support:

1. Sound land use legislation and programs;
2. The establishment of a farmland preservation strategy that coordinates and guides state and local policies, programs and actions to avoid and minimize the unnecessary and irretrievable conversion of productive agriculture land to nonagricultural uses. Ohio Department of Agriculture should maintain final decision authority on acceptance into the agriculture easement program;
3. The development of countywide, comprehensive land-use plans as an integral part of farmland preservation. Local control and local involvement should be emphasized;
4. Members serving on zoning commissions and on boards of zoning appeals;
5. Members being involved in the development and implementation of countywide comprehensive land-use plans;
6. County or township zoning plans addressing the potential change of use of a parcel from agricultural to non-agricultural when larger parcels are subdivided.
7. The use of Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Funds for the preservation of farms that contain creeks, streams, woods, or natural wetlands;
8. The preservation of prime land (classes I and II) and other land especially capable of dairy, equine, livestock, fruit, forestry and specialty crop production by encouraging involvement in the following programs:
 - a. Agriculture Easement Purchases
Investigation, development and implementation of funding and tax incentive programs for the preservation of farmland through the acquisition and transfer of development rights and an impact fee paid by individuals who convert farmland to non-agricultural uses. When land is sold for development or converted to non-agricultural use, an impact fee based on quality of land should be charged to the developer and used for farmland preservation.
 - b. Agriculture Easement Donations
Research, funding and implementations of voluntary programs to keep land in agricultural use.
 - c. Agriculture Districts
Protection of land in accordance with the Farmland Preservation Act (agricultural districts). The statute helps landowners deal with water, sewer and electric assessments, nuisance lawsuits and powers of eminent domain.
The Agriculture District Law should be strengthened by:
 - i. Lowering the acreage and percentage of land taken to trigger Ohio Department of Agriculture review of eminent domain.
 - ii. Requiring legal service on the eminent domain action by the Ohio Department of Agriculture.
 - iii. Providing greater protection against nuisance lawsuits.
 - iv. Allowing for deferred assessments for infrastructure improvements such as roads, sidewalks and private water companies, including transportation improvement districts.
 - v. Providing additional protection against eminent domain.

- 44 vi. Creating a uniform agricultural district application process for all lands
- 45 (whether the land is inside or outside of the city limits).
- 46 vii. Changing the Farmland Preservation Program rules to allow a farm that has
- 47 acreage in two or more counties to submit one application in the county where
- 48 the homestead is located, or where the majority of the acres are located.
- 49 d. Agriculture Security Areas
- 50 Those operations that meet the definition of agriculture as currently defined in
- 51 Ohio law, regardless of size, production method, or business structure, should be
- 52 designated agriculture, not commercial.
- 53 We support:
- 54 i. A reduction of the 500 acre threshold to 100 contiguous acres to enroll in an
- 55 Agricultural Security Area (ASA), however, the incentive to enroll in an ASA
- 56 should be higher the more acres that are enrolled.
- 57 ii. Providing the authority to directors and administrators of State of Ohio
- 58 agencies and units of government to enroll all or a portion of their publicly
- 59 owned agricultural or conservation property into Agricultural Security Areas
- 60 in conjunction with an application submitted by contiguous landowners.
- 61 e. Local and State Land Use Policies
- 62 We recommend programs to address the following issues:
- 63 i. Land use decisions made locally with adequate rural participation in sub-
- 64 division regulations;
- 65 ii. Recognition of basic property rights of individuals. State law or regulation
- 66 should not take away the economic value of property without fair
- 67 compensation;
- 68 iii. Effective zoning to meet the needs of rural Ohio. We recognize the
- 69 challenges being made to agricultural practices by zoning commissions and
- 70 encourage members to fight these challenges and continue to support
- 71 agriculture's exemptions from Ohio's zoning laws including efforts to educate
- 72 local zoning and building officials on agriculture's exemptions;
- 73 iv. Promotion of orderly development of urban areas including:
- 74 (1) the concentration of further development;
- 75 (2) the avoidance of needless sprawl of both strip and leapfrog development;
- 76 (3) the redevelopment of existing urban areas already served by infrastructure
- 77 and public services;
- 78 (4) policies to expedite rehabilitation of brownfield area by making it more
- 79 economically favorable;
- 80 (5) the redirecting of business and industry into rehabilitated brownfields by
- 81 providing favorable tax incentives; and
- 82 (6) support for a reduction in taxation as an incentive for people who
- 83 rehabilitate old homes or build new homes on existing home sites.
- 84 v. Infrastructure repair and reinvestment rather than new infrastructure
- 85 development. In the case of new development, fully allocate all costs to the
- 86 land developers and purchasers. Urge passage of legislation giving clear
- 87 permission for political entities to impose impact fees on new non-agriculture
- 88 construction;

- 89 vi. Coordination at all governmental levels, with consideration of adjoining land
- 90 uses from county to county and from community to community;
- 91 vii. Long-term highway construction right-of-way needs should be incorporated in
- 92 any comprehensive land use plan. The Ohio Department of Transportation
- 93 should make reasonable efforts to avoid taking prime farmland when planning
- 94 a road project;
- 95 viii. The Ohio Department of Development should revise their program on “shovel
- 96 ready” sites to give priority to infill and redevelopment of property rather than
- 97 to clean sites of high acreage;
- 98 ix. State and local economic development initiatives should be required to
- 99 include production agriculture in their recommendations;
- 100 x. We oppose efforts to impose the installation of riparian buffers through
- 101 zoning because it is a taking of private property. We encourage the
- 102 development of educational programs to improve the understanding of
- 103 farmland preservation and land-use issues. Some topics of importance are:
- 104 (1) Economic impact of the loss of prime farmland
- 105 (2) Conservation Security Programs and Carbon Credit Programs
- 106 (3) Economic importance of agriculture business and agriculture related
- 107 businesses of local economics;
- 108 9. The recognition by local zoning that animal husbandry includes the care and keeping
- 109 of any animals not deemed wild and dangerous.

Water and Sewer Rotary Fund

432

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

Transportation Improvement Districts

433

- 1 We oppose transportation improvement districts (TIDS) in their entirety.

Joint Economic Development Districts and Zones

434

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The use of Joint Economic Development Districts (JEDDs) and Joint Economic
- 3 Development Zones (JEDZ) as a way for cities, village and townships to cooperate in
- 4 the development of land.
- 5 We oppose:
- 6 1. Any JEDDs/JEDZ where all contracting parties and all property is not contiguous to
- 7 the proposed district;
- 8 2. Any JEDD/JEDZ that does not include the approval of the landowners owning a
- 9 majority of the acreage in the proposed district; and
- 10 3. Any JEDDs/JEDZ that does not include the majority of the land acreage that can be
- 11 developed and is zoned as commercial property. Entities entering into a JEDD/JEDZ

- 12 should have the ability to exempt from taxation any income derived from agricultural
13 production.

Public Property

435

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Communities involving departments of state government when developing
 - 3 comprehensive plans for township, county, village or city;
 - 4 2. The review of local comprehensive plans by the Department of Administrative
 - 5 Services and/or Development Service Agency prior to the lease or sale of State of
 - 6 Ohio owned land or facilities to ensure any change of use corresponds to these plans;
 - 7 3. The use of a portion of the revenues generated from the lease or sale of State of Ohio
 - 8 real property to address environmental remediation and community infrastructure
 - 9 issues associated with the property.
- 10 We oppose the lease or sale of State of Ohio owned land or facilities without proper
11 assurance of financial responsibilities of the developer, tenant or owner.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

State Funding, Efficiency and Shared Services

441

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The evaluation of increased efficiencies in local government as a cost savings
 - 3 measure. Local governments should be incentivized to eliminate inefficiencies, both
 - 4 with respect to multiple units of government and within the unit itself;
 - 5 2. Allowing local governments the ability to share resources and to more efficiently
 - 6 offer services while still maintaining each unit's identity;
 - 7 3. Legislation to provide a larger percentage of available funding for local governments;
 - 8 4. Raising the limit on force accounts and indexing them to inflation;
 - 9 5. Raising the limit of force accounts of county engineers for bridges and culverts from
 - 10 \$100,000 to \$200,000; and
 - 11 6. Requiring township solid waste disposal districts to permit residences with no need
 - 12 for collection service to opt out of the program and be exempted from service
 - 13 charges.
- 14 We oppose:
- 15 1. The imposition of auditing fees and requirements that can burden local governments
 - 16 with excessive costs;
 - 17 2. Quasi-governmental agencies with the power of eminent domain, taxation of property
 - 18 and trespassing rights over one's own private property.

Accountability

442

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Accountability to the general public by members of boards and commissions;
 - 3 2. Park district members being elected by the public;
 - 4 3. A park district strategy that balances recreational, agricultural and economic
 - 5 outcomes based upon the rural and urban makeup of the community;

- 6 4. Members of other boards, commissions (i.e. planning commission, zoning
- 7 commission), water districts and sanitary districts being appointed by the Board of
- 8 County Commissioners or Board of Township Trustees;
- 9 5. Public entities receiving public tax money should be held accountable for the funds
- 10 by audit available to the public.

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:
- 2 1. The current judicial organizations based upon county elected judges;
- 3 2. County engineers possessing a civil or construction engineering qualification and not
- 4 be required to be a certified surveyor;
- 5 3. Township level of government including the election of trustees;
- 6 4. Township trustees being granted the authority to offer a reward for information
- 7 leading to the arrest and conviction of individuals vandalizing township properties.
- 8 We oppose district judicial areas that combine several counties with one elected judge
- 9 and several appointed magistrates.

Charter Counties

445

- 1 We oppose all attempts by local political subdivisions to limit agricultural practices,
- 2 through including, but not limited to, the establishment of a county charter or any expansion
- 3 of home rule authority where it otherwise did not exist.

Annexation

446

- 1 We oppose:
- 2 1. Balloon annexation whereby a narrow corridor leads to the annexation of large tracts;
- 3 2. Any expansion of a municipality's right to require the approval of a plat beyond the
- 4 three-mile radius found in current law.

Boards of Health/Health Districts 447

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Local legislative oversight for Boards of Health/Health Districts;
- 3 2. Boards of Health/Health Districts uniformly administering and interpreting the
- 4 laws/codes no matter the county or jurisdiction.
- 5 We oppose:
- 6 1. Local Boards of Health/Health Districts having authority over the placement of line
- 7 fences;
- 8 2. Local Boards of Health/Health Districts having the authority to regulate livestock,
- 9 including the siting of facilities.

Mandates 448

- 1 We oppose the state or federal government placing mandates without providing funds for
- 2 the life of the mandate.

Public Library Services 449

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

LAWSUITS

Environmental 451

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. When lawsuits are filed on environmental and nuisance matters and the case is
- 3 dropped, or fails, all court costs and attorney fees of the defendant, as well as the
- 4 plaintiff, should be paid by the plaintiff;
- 5 2. Limiting the award of compensatory damages in agricultural nuisance lawsuits.

Tort Reform 452

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Civil litigation reform in Ohio;
- 3 2. Constitutional limitations and control of civil tort litigation, including but not limited
- 4 to proper control of nuisance and medical malpractice lawsuits.

STATE GOVERNMENT

Cost Savings 461

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. State agencies incentivizing managers and employees to save costs;
- 3 2. The creation of incentives to encourage agencies to reduce their spending;
- 4 3. The legislature reviewing all services and programs and eliminating low-performing
- 5 programs through the use of performance audits, sunset review provisions and other
- 6 available tools to balance the state budget.

Public Employee Benefits and Compensation 462

We support:

1. Public employee compensation being commensurate with private company salaries and benefits. Comparisons should only be made when similar work is being done by individuals with similar experiences;
2. The state conducting a comprehensive review of pay scales, job descriptions and qualifications;
3. State law permitting the use of health care pooling for all governmental entities;
4. State agencies and instrumentalities being required to utilize health care pooling if it realizes cost savings;
5. The state reviewing the eligibility to qualify for state and local government employee benefits.

State Retirement Systems 463

We support:

1. Public employee retirement plans being comparable to those in the private sector:
 - a. Employer contributions to state/local government employee retirement systems should be in line with employer taxes in the private sector;
 - b. Public retirement systems should be self-funded to meet their obligations.
2. Government moving new employees to a retirement system based on defined contributions.

Performance Audits 464

We support:

1. Unbiased comprehensive performance audits being conducted on state and regional agencies by outside entities;
2. The utilization of more targeted program specific audits or compensation audits.

Sunset Review 465

We support:

1. The continuation of Sunset Review;
2. Sunset review being used to evaluate cabinet level state agencies in addition to boards, commissions, committees, and councils.

Checks and Balances 466

We support:

1. The development of specific criteria before creating dedicated or “rotary account” funds;
2. State government reducing reliance on fees and permits to fund programs and should recognize that fees are a form of taxation;
3. Giving the General Assembly and the Governor the primary oversight for funding priorities.
 - a. Essential state programs should be funded by state tax dollars.
 - b. Those programs not essential to state government should be studied and possibly referred for consolidation or elimination.

- 11 c. To ensure rigorous consideration of programs, Ohio should adopt a “zero-base”
12 budget system for general revenue funds.

Long Term Budgeting

467

1 We support:

- 2 1. Ohio adopting a long term, strategic approach to budgeting that includes:
3 a. The public and private sectors both being engaged in the long-term plan, which
4 should be bipartisan in nature;
5 b. Both financial aspects (such as economic projections) and social demographics;
6 c. The planning process being updated as needed.

7 We oppose:

- 8 1. The planning process being binding on future policymakers;
9 2. Programs that have long-term costs being initiated with one-time dollars.

Privatization of Programs and Assets

468

1 We support:

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

REGULATORY REFORM

Regulatory Reform

471

1 We support:

- 2 1. The use of sound science and economic feasibility in the development and
3 establishment of regulations applied to agriculture;
4 2. The actions being undertaken by state government to initiate broad regulatory reform
5 through the establishment of guidance, standards and principles for the adoption and
6 administration of regulations. We believe that this process needs to incorporate the
7 following principles:
8 a. Recognition of property rights as the foundation for resource production;
9 b. The regulations are based upon sound scientific data which has been subject to
10 replication and peer review;
11 c. A risk assessment analysis should be conducted prior to the promulgation of a
12 regulation;
13 d. An estimate of the costs and benefits associated with public and private sector
14 compliance with the regulation must be conducted prior to promulgation of the
15 regulations;
16 e. Regulations should allow for flexibility of rules and regulations to fit varying
17 local conditions;
18 f. The regulations have been subject to independent analysis and public scrutiny;

- g. Alternatives to regulation have been considered, especially the provision of market-based incentives;
 - h. The regulations respect the practicalities of doing business in the industry being regulated;
 - i. The presumption of innocence as opposed to the current presumption of guilt should be strengthened;
 - j. The adoption of tools that measure the cumulative impact of regulations affecting production agriculture and believe this measurement should be completed prior to the implementation of any regulation impacting agriculture; and
 - k. Maintain a centralized electronic system for regulatory notification (“e-notification system”) that enables interested persons to receive notices from state agencies concerning development and drafting of rules, summaries of rule evaluation reports and notification of meetings regarding agency regulatory processes.
3. Limiting the ability to intervene in regulatory actions against landowners for environmental problems to adjoining landowners, neighbors, or those directly affected by the alleged violation;
 4. More efficient and expeditious decisions regarding mandatory government permit requests to encourage growth of new and existing business entities;
 5. Review of Ohio EPA programs that may be better implemented by ODA. We oppose the use of the precautionary principle in identifying rationale for new regulations. We oppose the concept of “mission creep” whereby any agency extends its authority beyond the original intent of rules and regulation.

TAXES

State and Local Taxes in General

481

We support:

1. Taxpayers’ money being efficiently used and, to stay within the state budget our state legislators making every effort to find cost savings measures before raising taxes;
2. The continuation of an online system for taxpayers to review state and local spending;
3. Revenue to the state being received through the following continuum of taxation from most palatable to least palatable:
 - a. the income tax;
 - b. the state sales tax;
 - c. the Commercial Activity Tax (CAT);
 - d. property taxes.
4. Streamline state tax collection, including municipal income taxes;
5. Legislation that will benefit members living in unincorporated areas but who are impacted by municipal income taxes;
6. The establishment of a tax relief and/or easement program that would provide income to landowners while allowing state agencies to implement preservation policies when a government agency promulgates restrictions;
7. Legislation permitting local governments to levy an admission tax on special events to pay for expenses of controlling and policing such events;

- 19 8. State and national tax exemption on interest income from savings accounts and
- 20 investments.
- 21 9. Exempting capital gains from Ohio taxable income as long as the real property is held
- 22 for more than five years;
- 23 10. The concept of a voter-approved bond measure for water quality;
- 24 11. Taxes on intrastate transmission lines being taxed at the same rate as distribution
- 25 lines. Interstate transmission lines should continue to be taxed at the higher rate.
- 26 We oppose
- 27 1. Any excessive and unfair taxes;
- 28 2. All state voter referendums that propose bond issues, unless the referendum includes
- 29 sources of revenue needed to pay off the bond (principle and interest);
- 30 3. Income received from fees and assessments from an agency or program being
- 31 returned to general purpose or general revenue funds.

Property Taxes

482

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. Maintaining the 10 percent and 2-1/2 percent property tax rollback for existing and
- 3 renewal levies and reinstating the 10 percent and 2-1/2 percent property tax rollback
- 4 for new and replacement levies;
- 5 2. The rate adjustment factor and the 10-mill limitation on inside millage;
- 6 3. Real property tax reappraisals and triennial updates being done in a manner that
- 7 accurately reflects the true value of home sites, buildings and land;
- 8 4. Legislation that would change the meaning of the county auditors' definition "true
- 9 market value" or "market value." These terms should mean the current purchase
- 10 price of the land, even if it is sold by auction;
- 11 5. Farm Bureau members reviewing their tax bills and property tax cards to determine
- 12 the accuracy of the assigned value;
- 13 6. Restructuring the County Board of Revision to include nonpolitical members with the
- 14 appropriate qualifications so that there is an independent review of the auditor's
- 15 evaluations;
- 16 7. Property tax relief for landowners who use best management practices along
- 17 waterways;
- 18 8. Non-permanent agricultural structures being treated as personal property and not
- 19 taxed as real property;
- 20 9. Tax policies that maintain an appropriate balance between production agriculture and
- 21 conservation practices.
- 22 We oppose any additional obligation (except in voter approved rate increases) on real
- 23 property taxes to fund local or any other level of government, including schools.

CAUV

483

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. OFBF helping protect CAUV in Ohio and promoting the integrity of the program by
- 3 supporting the enforcement of its standards;
- 4 2. The same CAUV law interpretation in all counties;
- 5 3. Education and training of county auditor employees implementing the CAUV
- 6 program;

4. Changing the CAUV sign-up period to once every five years to coincide with the Agricultural District sign-up period.

CAUV Qualifications

We support:

1. Maintaining the minimum acreage requirement to qualify for CAUV at 10 acres, or a minimum of \$2,500 gross agricultural income;
2. The inclusion of equine and equine activities as a qualifying use for the CAUV program;
3. Allowing all lands enrolled in a federal conservation program to qualify for CAUV;
4. Working with SWCD for non-federal program conservation practices;
5. Working with ODNR Division of Forestry regarding forestry stewardship and best management practices;
6. Allowing up to 25 percent of a farm to be used for conservation practices (such as buffer strips, filter strips, grass waterways, permanent cover crops and wetlands) without losing CAUV status;
7. The land under permanent farm markets and greenhouses being eligible for CAUV. Eligibility should require at least 50 percent owner-produced commodities. This eligibility would be consistent with land under other agricultural structures;
8. Reforming Ohio Forest Tax Law to reflect the importance of managing woodlands and providing services to landowners with woodlands. We support ODNR Division of Forestry providing a more consistent inspection and enforcement of the Forest Tax Law statewide that would allow for better management of woodlands;
9. Legislation that would require woodlands to have a simple forest management plan to qualify for CAUV. The plans need to be written by a state, SWCD, or private lands forester. We would oppose any requirement that a “master logger” harvest timber as it applies to the CAUV program;
10. Tracts, lots or parcels of land where the title is held by one owner and which are farmed as one farming unit being allowed to be combined to qualify for CAUV, even if the tracts, lots or parcels are located in different counties. The auditor in the county where the majority of the land is located shall determine the eligibility of the land in the neighboring county. The tax revenue generated by each individual parcel shall still go to the county where the individual parcel is located;
11. Legislation requiring non-profit groups and organizations [501(c)(3)] that maintain land or other property that are used only for investment or money raising to pay property taxes on those holdings if such properties are not a part of their primary mission and location;
12. Time limitations for hearings and decisions by the Board of Revisions regarding CAUV qualifications to allow the appeal process to take place in a more timely manner.

CAUV Calculation

We support:

1. An objective CAUV formula that accurately values farmland for its agricultural use;
2. The CAUV formula be thoroughly reviewed to ensure that data used in the calculation is recent, relevant and reflective of Ohio’s agricultural economy;

- 53 3. Efforts made to reduce volatility in valuation;
- 54 4. Property taxes should not be collected on established woodlands that are not being
- 55 used as a source of income;
- 56 5. Continuous review to ensure that the capitalization rate used in the CAUV formula is
- 57 accurate;

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

60 *CAUV Recoupment*

61 We support:

- 62 1. Refraining from charging CAUV recoupment during the installation and development
- 63 of energy exploration, generation and or transmission projects until the project is
- 64 established and an accurate accounting of land taken out of agricultural production is
- 65 determined;
- 66 2. Extending the time a farm can lie fallow before recoupment takes place if the farm is
- 67 unable to be farmed for reasons such as, health of the farmer, size of the farm, quality
- 68 of the soil, etc., as long as the farm is not sold, transferred or otherwise developed in
- 69 that time;
- 70 3. Deferring CAUV recoupment for properties changing from CAUV to Ohio Forest
- 71 Tax Law;
- 72 4. Deferred recoupment being charged if the landowner were removed from Ohio Forest
- 73 Tax Law at a later date without returning to the CAUV program.
- 74

Public Property

484

1 We support:

- 2 1. State or federal tax-exempt agencies being required to pay real property tax on
- 3 properties from which income is being derived;
- 4 2. The State of Ohio establishing user fees, admissions, tuition, licensing, etc., to
- 5 reimburse local units, including school districts, for revenue loss due to publicly
- 6 owned publicly owned land and facilities;.
- 7 3. Legislation that requires the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to pay taxes on
- 8 all land and real estate owned by the department for recreational or environmental
- 9 purposes. These taxes should be paid to local governmental subdivisions and school
- 10 districts at the same rate and value as paid by private property owners;
- 11 4. Farmland previously used by the Ohio prison system remain in agricultural use;
- 12 5. Programs that would provide a preference to beginning farmers, as defined by USDA
- 13 FSA, when state lands are available for agricultural use.

Income Tax

485

1 We support:

- 2 1. Our lawmakers to consider a “fair tax” law that makes taxes equitable among all
- 3 levels of income. Additional revenue, if needed, should come primarily from the
- 4 personal income tax and, under some circumstances, from an increase in sales and use
- 5 tax rates, rather than from eliminating exemptions;
- 6 2. Use of the optional local school district income tax in preference to property tax;

3. Legislation to eliminate the requirement of quarterly filing for city income taxes for those reporting agricultural incomes;
4. A change in state tax laws that will eliminate the penalty for couples filing joint tax returns;
5. Legislation that would create a state income tax credit for all capital gains taxes if land is taken by eminent domain;
6. Legislation to increase the dollar amount for accelerated depreciation for businesses and farms to match the federal tax regulations;
7. State income tax incentives for donated conservation and agricultural easements

Sales Tax

486

We support:

1. The continuation of the agricultural sales tax exemption;
2. The use of a statewide sales tax and/or income tax to fund education in place of increases in real property tax;
3. The replacement of property taxes with the revenue from additional statewide sales tax, thus creating a reduction in property tax;
4. An Internet sales tax; however, current Ohio sales tax exemptions should apply;
5. Requiring that all state agencies accept “postmarked by” instead of “received by” for paperwork filings;
6. Legislation that uses the common definition of agriculture for determining the sales tax exemption for all-purpose off-highway vehicles;
7. The price of any vehicle transaction subject to sales or use tax be the difference between the selling price and the trade in values of the vehicles involved in the transaction.

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

Tax Abatements, Credits, Incentives

487

We support:

1. The State of Ohio conducting a study to determine if tax abatements actually pay for themselves and are a valid way to encourage business growth;
2. Guidelines that require the new industry to meet certain standards when tax abatements are granted for industry;
3. Tax abatements for business locating on an abandoned site, rather than on prime farmland. If businesses given tax abatements leave before, or immediately at the end of an abatement period, they should pay a tax recoupment penalty of a high percentage of their years of agreement. We support a provision in state law authorizing recoupment as part of any incentive, credit, or abatement and encourage local government officials to include that provision in any agreements. We also support reimbursement or payment in lieu of taxes to schools and other local governments;
4. County commissioners continuing to have the opportunity to review all requested property tax abatements.
5. OFBF working with Buy Ohio to initiate tax incentives for Ohio businesses that purchase Ohio agricultural commodities to produce their end-use products. These

18 incentives would encourage agri-business to locate in Ohio and to limit their
 19 commodity purchases to “Ohio grown”. This program would also provide the
 20 business with a “locally grown” marketing opportunity.

Motor Vehicle Fuels Tax

488

1 We support:

- 2 1. A continued evaluation of the adequacy of the current level of the motor fuels tax.
- 3 2. Alternative methods for distribution of the motor vehicle fuels tax;
- 4 3. Alternative methods to fund road safety and maintenance.

5 Motor vehicle fuels taxes may no longer be the only answer due to alternative vehicles
 6 and new technology used to fuel cars. Any discussion should ensure equity for agricultural
 7 usage.

Motor Vehicle License and Highway Use Tax

489

1 We support:

- 2 1. The State of Ohio enforcing and assuring compliance with the current system of
- 3 individual auto liability insurance coverage;
- 4 2. The Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles being required to notify an individual if his/her
- 5 driver’s license is suspended;
- 6 3. Increasing the property damage and bodily injury state minimum insurance levels for
- 7 mandatory auto liability insurance. Current levels are too low to cover accident
- 8 expenses in many cases according to today’s costs;
- 9 4. Continued exemption from license fees for wagons subject to slow moving vehicle
- 10 regulation;
- 11 5. A simple fee for transferring the license from the lease company to the owner being
- 12 available. Currently, vehicle license tags cannot be transferred at the end of a lease
- 13 contract when the lessee purchases the vehicle. This can result in virtual double
- 14 taxation for the same owner/operator;
- 15 6. When additional state highway funds are available through an increase in the motor
- 16 fuel tax, an adequate amount should be allocated to address the needs of rural roads
- 17 and bridges;
- 18 7. The Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles reinstating the word “farm” back on farm plated
- 19 vehicles;
- 20 8. The license plates that promote agriculture, Ohio’s number one industry;
- 21 9. The Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles to allow the option of renewing commercial
- 22 vehicle and farm truck registrations via U.S. mail and/or the internet;
- 23 10. A farm truck that uses a six-month license to be exempt from financial responsibility
- 24 (insurance) during the off-season;
- 25 11. Fines and penalties from violations of weights and measures regulations being used
- 26 for the repair of roads and bridges wherein the funds are used within the county that
- 27 the violation occurred.

28 We oppose:

- 29 1. The use of fuel and highway use taxes for any purpose other than roadway
- 30 infrastructure, construction and repair;
- 31 2. The titling and licensing of farm machinery;
- 32 3. The removal of front license plates on motor vehicles.

Severance Tax on Oil and Gas**490**

1 We support:

- 2 1. The regulatory costs related to drilling being funded through drilling permits and the
- 3 severance tax;
- 4 2. Any proposal that provides tax credits in relation to severance tax payments should
- 5 proportionally benefit producers and landowners with royalty interests.

6 We oppose an increase in the severance tax solely to fund an income tax reduction. If
7 there is an increase in the severance tax, the revenue generated should be organized along the
8 following priorities:

- 9 1. Support for ODNR Oil and Gas regulatory and enforcement programs.
- 10 2. Support a contribution to a fund to be used solely for the Ohio Orphan Well Program.
- 11 3. Support for programs addressing planning, local infrastructure, economic and
- 12 community development in the areas/counties impacted by drilling and pipeline
- 13 placement.
- 14 4. Support for reduction of income tax.

Commercial Activity Tax**491**

1 We support:

- 2 1. The ultimate elimination of the Commercial Activity Tax (CAT);
- 3 2. The reinstatement of the provision in law that if the CAT generates revenue beyond
- 4 original estimates, half of the excess funds would be placed into a rainy day fund and
- 5 half applied to an overall rate reduction;
- 6 3. The current CAT exemption threshold of \$150,000 be raised to at least \$500,000;
- 7 4. Exempting all farms from the CAT that are required to pay the Ohio Income Tax;
- 8 5. Fiscal responsibility in state government;

9 We oppose any rate increases in the current CAT, as well as any increases in the
10 administrative fee.

Estate Taxes and Estate Administration**492**

1 We support:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

21 We recommend establishment of a new, more reasonable fire code category for above
22 ground, private fueling sites with a combined tankage of 5,000 gallons or less. Consideration
23 should be given to proper venting, labeling and distances from important structures.

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

30 We support member participation in programs utilizing voluntary, science-based,
31 confidential self-assessment and management practice tracking tools. Information generated
32 by assessment and management practice tracking programs is confidential and exempt from
33 disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Aggregate data that would
34 demonstrate effectiveness of the overall program could be shared at the approval of the
35 farmer.

36 We encourage continued research and the use of sound conservation practices designed to
37 minimize the offsite transport of nutrients and crop residue.

38 We believe Ohio environmental regulations should not be more stringent than federal
39 regulations.

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

We support the development of penal code to deter chronic and frivolous complaints against agricultural operations.

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

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

We support state agencies incorporating nutrient management practices in mitigation projects.

We support regulatory and environmental agencies requiring and collecting contact information and pictorial proof of infractions from individuals submitting nutrient applications complaints.

AIR

E-check 511

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

Acid Rain 512

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

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

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

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

Clean Air 513

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

Any state regulations developed to implement the Federal Clean Air Act and other air quality laws should be scientifically sound, based on credible data, practical, realistic and economically feasible. Regulatory action should wait for the development of proven 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 and
2 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 allow
5 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 farmland
5 should apply to bio-solid application. We encourage farmers to utilize Best Management
6 Practices for the application and use of bio-solids, which includes obtaining a complete
7 chemical analysis performed by a qualified laboratory, of the bio-solids being applied,
8 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 on
13 efficient land application of bio-solids to strip-mine reclamation projects to avoid polluting
14 our soil and water. We are against the indiscriminate spreading of bio-solids on any land.
15 All bio-solids used on land should continue to be sampled and analyzed for metals, organics
16 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 the
2 largest municipality of each county within a solid waste management district. Ratification of
3 the solid waste management plan, as prepared by the solid waste policy committee, would be
4 solely and strictly contingent upon determining that a sufficient number of legislative
5 authorities have approved the plan.

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

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

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

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

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

We encourage the use of agriculturally based biodegradable packaging products.

We urge proper enforcement of present regulations concerning the transportation and handling of hazardous material to ensure proper response in event of accidents. Whenever possible, hazardous waste should be neutralized at the site of production before being transported.

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

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

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

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

Household Sewage Treatment

523

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

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

- 21 7. Support a uniform inspection standard that is fair to all homeowners that utilize a
- 22 home sewage treatment system;
- 23 8. Support the proper and safe disposal of septage; and
- 24 9. Homeowners should not be required to abandon their private sewage treatment
- 25 system and connect to a public sewage system when it becomes accessible to the
- 26 property, if the private sewage system is inspected and approved by a qualified
- 27 inspector.
- 28 10. We oppose any fees that would be associated with the evaluations of septic systems.
- 29 11. We support the inspection of existing home property septic systems prior to closing.

Waste Disposal and Recycling

524

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

We support a civil remedy against dealers in scrap metal who purchase metals under circumstances where the purchaser knows, or should know, that the metal is stolen.

We encourage agricultural plastic recycling programs to include research into alternative value added products to keep plastic out of landfills.

We support the Ohio EPA to develop a statewide action plan for Joint Solid Waste Districts to deal with agricultural, horticultural and marine recyclables.

We encourage local units of government to utilize alternative labor resources to remove roadside litter and trash.

WATER

Nonpoint Source Pollution

531

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

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

We ask that ODNR Engineers offer training to Land Improvement Contractors that wish to design erosion control practices that they install to expedite the benefits of having such practices in place.

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

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

We encourage government entities to adhere to the same water quality standards as industry, agriculture and private landowners.

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

We promote urban and rural conservation practices that minimize nutrient and pesticide runoff, including stream buffers, rain gardens and other infiltration management practices

34 such as long term no-till and cover crops, soil testing and proper fertilization, and pesticide
35 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 for
 - 3 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 practices
 - 15 to protect surface and ground water resources that are delivered in a flexible and
 - 16 voluntary manner;
 - 17 9. Support the watershed specialists in the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and
 - 18 the Ohio State University Extension in the implementation of the Watershed Action
 - 19 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 for
 - 22 agricultural, horticultural and related operations and assisting affected members with
 - 23 compliance.
 - 24 12. Support the H2Ohio Initiative and the steps that need to be taken to improve our
 - 25 waterways.

Conservation and Market-Based Incentives

533

- 1 Improving the environment by enhancing the conservation, wise use and productivity of
2 our natural resources through private ownership, individual freedom and market-oriented
3 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 We support:
- 11 1. Compensation at fair market value for environmental or regulatory costs that
 - 12 contribute to the public good.
 - 13 2. The development, promotion and education of farmers about market-based incentive
 - 14 programs, such as nutrient and carbon credit trading as alternatives to government
 - 15 prescriptions.

Nutrient Management**534**

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

1. be part of a comprehensive nutrient loss reduction strategy addressing all sources of nutrients;
2. provide adequate funding for research, education and outreach;
3. provide adequate resources for the development, administration and implementation of the certification program;
4. be economically feasible for farmers;
5. be reasonable and not burdensome to production agriculture;
6. have a foundation based on sound research and field data that will result in meaningful off-site nutrient reduction;
7. be technology driven; and
8. provide clarity regarding the criteria for suspension of a certification.

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

We support providing education, funding and tools to assist every farmer in putting together a nutrient management plan.

We support the development of uniform state and federal nutrient specific application standards that recognize the differences between agronomic, economic and environmental thresholds.

We support the establishment of a uniform template for the reporting of soil test results.

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

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

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

Any additional regulations, restrictions, or research on nutrient application should include resources for implementation, as well as consideration of scientific, agronomic, environmental, regional, and economic impacts.

We support increased funding for livestock nutrient storage facilities using reasonable and necessary construction guidelines.

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

Any substance being defined as an agricultural pollutant should be based on sound science and clearly delineated in statute. We believe a farmer and/or applicator who has applied nutrients following the principles of 4R Nutrient Stewardship should receive a safe harbor from violation.

We support the Department of Agriculture's Livestock Environmental Permitting Program to adopt reasonable, economically viable, scientifically based rules related to its certified livestock manager (CLM) program. This would include, but not be limited to,

46 requiring a chain of responsibility regarding correct transportation, application and
 47 monitoring of nutrients from livestock facilities.

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

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

- 52 1. Provides appropriate regulatory authority to manage violations with timely and fair
 53 enforcement.
- 54 2. Creates efficiencies, cost savings and reduces duplication.
- 55 3. Creates certainty to farmers in regards to regulatory authority.
- 56 4. Continues and improves compliance assistance to farmers.
- 57 5. Provides appropriate resources to implement.
- 58 6. Results in environmental improvement.

59 We support collaborative efforts among agriculture, municipalities and industry to find
 60 solutions that have a positive impact on nutrient management.

61 We support demonstration projects to showcase conservation practices and promote
 62 awareness of nutrient stewardship efforts to other farmers, members of the public and
 63 regulators.

64 OFBF should encourage Ohio Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to
 65 consider funding for animal waste concerns within a broader context of systems approach to
 66 nutrient management the specifically would permit funding for manure storage structures on
 67 crop farms. OFBF should encourage the Ohio NRCS to evaluate their current point system
 68 for solving resource concerns and make changes that would allow EQIP funding for
 69 construction of manure storage structures on crop farms that have a working agreement with
 70 livestock and a nutrient management plan.

71 We support the State of Ohio providing incentives for farmers who perform on-farm
 72 nutrient management trial tests/research that addresses water quality.

73 We support the development of a uniform set of guidelines to assist farmers in the
 74 management of manure when impacted by extreme weather events.

Farm Stewardship Certification Program

535

1 If a farm or agricultural nutrient stewardship certification program is developed, it must
 2 consider the following:

- 3 1. Participation in the program is voluntary.
- 4 2. Participants are offered incentives for participation, including cost-sharing and/or
 5 additional points on federal, state and local practice incentives.
- 6 3. Certified farmers receive regulatory certainty.
- 7 4. Certified farmers are considered to be in compliance with any new water quality rules
 8 or laws during the period of certification.
- 9 5. Certified farmers and those seeking certification are given a priority for technical
 10 assistance. Farmers seeking certification can obtain specially designated technical
 11 and financial assistance to implement practices that promote water quality.
- 12 6. Certification is based on the use of management practices and systems that are
 13 scientifically sound to achieve verifiable water quality gains in an economic manner.

7. Certification program provides confidentiality to farmers in the development and implementation of conservation plans but also requires verification to provide assurance that producers have taken necessary steps to achieve goals.
8. Adequate resources (people and financial) are made available to administer and deliver the program.
9. Certified farmers are granted a legal rebuttable presumption/protection.
10. Program is conducted in conjunction with ongoing efforts underway in the Western Lake Erie Basin (nutrient management plan development project, 4R Nutrient Stewardship Certification Program and SB 150 implementation efforts).
11. Program delivered on a statewide basis.

Watercourse Differentiation

536

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

1. Ohio Environmental Protection Agency should designate water courses based on their numerical scores (ICI), fish (IBI) and habitat (QHEI) at the time of testing and not on a perceived improvement potential.
2. Due to confusion caused by labeling all watercourses as streams, we believe definitions should be adopted to differentiate the types of watercourses found in a watershed. Some examples are the following:
 - a. Watercourse-Any concentrated flow of water.
 - b. Stream-A watercourse that existed historically and has a steady flow of water.
 - c. Modified Stream-A watercourse that existed historically, has a steady flow of water but has been altered by man at some time in the past to better serve other uses.
 - d. Channel-A watercourse that existed historically and has periods of intermittent or no water flow.
 - e. Modified Channel - A watercourse that existed historically, has periods of intermittent or no water flow, but has been altered by man at some time in the past to better serve other uses.
 - f. Man-Made Channel-A watercourse that did not exist historically and has periods of intermittent or no water flow (also known as a Ditch). Maintained Man-Made Channel-A watercourse that did not exist historically, has periods of intermittent or no water flow and is maintained under an authorized government program.
3. The “LRW or limited resource water” designation used by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency has a three (3) square mile or less drainage area requirement, which should be removed. Many man-made and maintained man-made channels have drainage areas over (3) square miles with intermittent or no flow periods, but are given designations higher than LRW because of drainage area.
4. IBI (fish) and ICI (bug) scores should not apply to watercourses with intermittent or no water flow.

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

Stormwater**537**

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 practices
13 on agricultural lands when Storm Water Phase II assessments are established.

14 The ratio of impervious surface to unimproved surface on agricultural land should be
15 considered when setting assessment fees, ensuring that agriculture is not unduly burdened by
16 stormwater assessments.

17 We support and encourage all new developments to install site appropriate water
18 retention or detention basins.

Water**538**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We will oppose wellhead protection legislation that:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We support the practice of irrigating wastewater from controlled discharge lagoons.

We support the harvesting of forages in filter strips and grass waterways to serve as a mechanism for utilizing accumulated nutrients.

Out-of-Basin Transfer of Water

539

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

We believe:

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

We support:

1. Efforts which will provide a high priority status to agricultural water use;
2. Research and education to increase the efficiency of agricultural water use; and

3. The development of a study of agricultural water use in Ohio and associated ecological benefits.

We oppose:

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

Wetlands

540

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

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

All wetland determinations should be made in the field by Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) personnel or trained and certified technical service providers under NRCS oversight in a timely manner so landowners can do land and drainage improvements.

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

NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural Resources

541

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

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

We support conservancy district authority to develop storm water management plans.

We continue to support the small watershed programs developed under P.L. 566.

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

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

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

We believe that local, state and national forests and wildlife areas should be required to properly identify and maintain all property lines and their share of fences and, upon request

of adjoining landowners, cut back trees and brush. We encourage individual private landowners to follow similar guidelines.

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

We recommend the Ohio Department of Natural Resources bring land rental agreements up to date for land cash rented so they meet current agricultural production practices while keeping nutrient best management practices (BMPs) in mind.

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

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

Oil and Gas

542

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

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

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

We support drilling for oil and gas on public lands.

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

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

A system must be established providing all leaseholders uniform verification of quantities of oil, natural gas and natural gas liquids reported as produced from wells in the State of Ohio. System features should:

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

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

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

40 We support all wells reporting annual production data to ODNR-Division of Oil and Gas
41 undergo an audit process on a regularly scheduled basis.

42 An oil and gas metering inspection program should be established under rules created by
43 the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Oil and Gas Resources Management
44 whereby an independent, third party service provider can inspect all metering equipment and
45 provide landowner-friendly reports on the production of all wells in the drilling unit or pool.
46 The program should inspect and seal all metering technology used from wellhead to sales
47 point on an annual basis.

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

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

64 We oppose the practice of lease modification when it permits a developer to incorporate
65 an old lease into a large acreage drilling pool by simply changing the original number of
66 acres allowed for pooling as specified in its original terms.

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

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

Oil and gas producers should be required to maintain oil and gas well sites by mowing vegetation not utilized by landowner and painting equipment and tanks. All lines should be buried below the frost line or at a 48 inch depth, whichever is deeper.

We encourage ODNR to set guidelines to assist landowners to determine when an oil and gas well is considered in production or out of production.

We strongly support requiring companies to plug and decommission non-productive, non-operating wells in a timely manner according to ORC 1509, forfeit the leasehold back to the landowner and automatically record an affidavit of forfeiture and abandonment with the county recorder's office.

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

With the increase of oil and gas pipeline construction in county regions and the ever increasing need for the time-consuming development, implementation and oversight of the road use maintenance agreement (RUMA) between the county engineer and the emergency service providers, we recommend a change in state law to allow for the reimbursement of county engineer expenses incurred to design, implement and monitor RUMA directives by the energy service providers.

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

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

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

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

We support an injection well permitting process that includes all necessary local government authority.

We support a process where the Ohio Attorney General, Ohio Auditor of State, ODNR-Division of Oil and Gas and other interested government agencies, professional and stakeholder organizations create an effective information, education and policy process addressing technical, audit and accounting issues concerning data collection, tax and royalty payment procedures in Ohio.

We support public notice from the State of Ohio Oil and Gas Commission to all landowners where drilling unit is under consideration for a permit where access to resources from under public land comes from placement of the well pad upon their property.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts

543

We strongly support Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) and their purpose of encouraging proper soil, water and other natural resource management and the promotion of economic and social development of the state. However, SWCDs must undergo a transformation to ensure their long-term sustainability and adherence to this purpose. As part of this transformation, SWCDs should:

1. Define their core purpose and increase their emphasis on the conservation of soil, water and related resources;
2. Establish the ability to direct SWCD programs and services on appropriate geographical boundaries to address the identified resource needs while retaining a program presence in each county;
3. Pursue increased collaboration and the sharing of services across all levels of government.

We encourage more farmer participation and involvement on SWCD boards.

We support a dedicated and permanent source of funding and program delivery model that provides the flexibility to adjust to changes in local and state financial support.

Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers and Creeks

544

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

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

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

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

We urge the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to allow third parties hired by the landowners to be able to remove logjams that have occurred on scenic rivers.

MINERAL DEVELOPMENT

Longwall Mining

551

We support a longwall mining policy which:

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

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

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

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

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

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

We believe upon completion of mining in any given area the safety of the mine should be established immediately so permitting for oil and gas is an option so as not to block mineral extraction possibilities.

Reclamation of Strip Mined Land

552

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

29 We encourage demonstration projects on converting unreclaimed strip mine land for
30 agricultural use.

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

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

36 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 rights,
2 by identifying and determining the status of any notarized and filed leases, easements,
3 mineral right severances and corresponding documents that show cancellation or
4 abandonment of these agreements with a comprehensive title search.

5 We support a reasonable legal process that allows landowners to join previously severed
6 dormant mineral estates to the surface, after a reasonable review of freely accessible public
7 records and notice to the last known/recorded owner of the severed minerals or, if the record
8 owner is deceased, notice to any heirs that can be reasonably identified and located through a
9 reasonable review of freely accessible public records. A bright line test should be established
10 to determine what is reasonable. The dormant mineral owner should be required to prove
11 that a specified savings event occurred within a specified time period to retain their severed
12 mineral interest. A valid savings event by a mineral interest owner should only preserve the
13 proportional mineral interests of that mineral owner. The law should not allow the dormant
14 mineral owner to preserve severed minerals by merely responding to a notice once the
15 surface owner has already begun the legal process to rejoin the minerals with the surface.

16 We support title to severed mineral estates should be subject to the same legal
17 presumptions as other property interests with regard to marketability of title.

18 We support legislation that:

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

- 35 6. Clarifies the rights and responsibilities of parties claiming ownership of severed
36 mineral interests and those of current surface owners wishing to rejoin these severed
37 interests to their property. Provisions should include:
- 38 a. Establishing a universally recognized date upon which actions taken by interested
39 parties wanting to preserve their severed mineral interests, as well as persons
40 wanting to rejoin severed interests to their property can be referenced.
 - 41 b. Giving owners of severed mineral interests the opportunity to file a new, initial
42 claim with the county recorder maintaining their right of ownership over a defined
43 period of time. The claim of ownership will continue as long as the persons
44 continue to renew their ownership interests by filing any one of several legally
45 accepted “savings events” with the county recorder on a regular, timely basis.
 - 46 c. Giving surface owners wanting to rejoin severed mineral interests to their
47 property the ability to automatically rejoin these interests if no, new initial claims
48 have been filed during a specific time period after the universally recognized date
49 referenced in point “a” has passed.
 - 50 d. If a new, initial claim has been filed within a specific time period to the reference
51 date, but no additional claims have been filed afterwards, the surface owner has
52 the right to file an affidavit showing that they had followed, with due diligence
53 and in good faith, all notice and recording procedures set forth in the legislation to
54 notify potential owners of their intention and interest, and that 60 days had passed
55 without a response from potential severed mineral estate holders. Once the
56 affidavit is filed, the severed mineral estate will be rejoined to the property.

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

- 60 1. Identification and leasing subsurface geologic formations where natural gas is
61 injected, stored and withdrawn on an annual basis.
- 62 2. Additional infrastructure is present, facilitating injection, storage and
63 withdrawal operations.
- 64 3. Direct pipeline connections facilitating delivery of storage gas to customers in
65 regional, state and local markets.

66 Energy service providers acquiring leases focusing on natural gas storage capacity
67 must recognize that these agreements were created to facilitate and protect market-
68 sourced natural gas and do not necessarily address the harvesting of additional oil and
69 natural gas resources in geologic formations near the storage field.

70 We support legislation that promotes dialogue between landowners and energy
71 service providers that create plans that address unique needs to maintain weed control
72 around pipeline and storage well infrastructure. This includes the opportunity to
73 register the property on a “do not mow” list.

74 Leaseholders must be given the opportunity to work cooperatively with energy service
75 providers to determine rights of access and leasing of geologic formations above and below
76 storage field capacity for additional oil and gas exploration. Landowners leasing storage
77 field capacity must have the ability to negotiate and/or modify agreements to allow them to
78 receive economic and environmental benefits similar to landowners with traditional oil and
79 gas leases in the community.

80 Unless detailed in the respective lease agreement, Energy Service Provider's vegetation
 81 management plan around its owned wellheads and infrastructure must be approved and/or
 82 compliment the respective landowner's vegetation plan. The landowners will be
 83 compensated by the Energy Service Provider for executing the vegetation management plan
 84 around the wellhead and related infrastructure located on the property.

Wildlife Management

Endangered Species

561

1 Species thriving in another state should not be listed as endangered or threatened in Ohio.
 2 Land use should not be restricted based on the presence of an endangered species, or its
 3 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 and livestock 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 permit
 12 hunters on their property from liability for injuries or damages caused by the hunters.

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

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

17 We oppose any further restrictions of current trapping methods to control livestock
 18 predation and crop damage.

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

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

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

26 We encourage the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to increase efforts to promote
 27 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 the
 29 State of Ohio.

30 We oppose the elimination of commercial fishing.

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

33 We believe landowners, regardless of business structure, should be allowed to hunt on
34 their own land without permits and their family lineage to have the same reciprocal access.

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

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

39 We support the Ohio Department of Natural Resources keeping the Division of Wildlife
40 separate from other divisions.

41 We oppose changing the required hunter orange to any other color.

Wildlife and Plant Introduction

563

1 We encourage the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to work with landowners and
2 hold one public hearing followed by issue ballot in proposed areas of native or new wildlife
3 introduction and to reduce problem areas when they become known to them whether it be
4 wildlife or vegetation.

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

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

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

Wildlife Violations

564

1 We support the enforcement of wildlife laws and the establishment of criminal penalties.
2 We are opposed to civil penalties that make unreasonable charges for fish and animal loss
3 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 permission
6 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 of
5 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 support the review of nuisance permitting procedures and policies to create more
9 efficient and timely options for nuisance wildlife control.

10 We support allowing agricultural producers the right to harvest deer that are actively
11 destroying or causing damage to any agricultural crop that is intended for income prior to
12 obtaining a deer damage permit. Each deer harvested must be reported within 12 hours.

13 Reporting must be completed by the harvester.

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

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

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

There is a need for both the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) to focus on wildlife damage in the state. We recommend the establishment of a wildlife animal damage control advisory committee. The committee should be comprised of a representative of the ODA, the ODNR, Ohio State University Extension wildlife specialist and an appropriate number of farmers and sportsmen.

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

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

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

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

Animal Damage Control and Wildlife Damage Fund

566

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

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

We support research and the utilization of wildlife population control methods, including financial incentives, in addition to hunting and trapping.

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

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

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

Crop Damaging Birds and Animals

567

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

4 We support a research project that will compare wildlife damage to crops (including hay)
5 to controlled crop areas.

6 We encourage more liberal distribution of wildlife nuisance permits by the ODNR
7 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 population in
2 problem areas until it is no longer an economic problem and a risk to public health.

3 Furthermore, we encourage the State of Ohio to petition the federal government to remove
4 Canada Geese from the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1916.

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

8 We support a yearlong statewide resident nuisance goose season and increased bag 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 or
4 fall season.

5 We oppose the stocking of wild turkeys in areas currently unpopulated by wild 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 and
3 extend the trapping season to November 10th similarly to other furbearing animals.

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 continue
3 to work with the Ohio Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Ohio
4 Department of Natural Resources and the Ohio General Assembly in protecting Ohio’s flocks
5 and herds from coyote and coydog depredation.

6 We support:

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

11 2. Maintaining a “year round” open hunting and trapping season on coyotes.

12 We oppose:

13 1. Requiring a fur taker permit for any coyotes taken through hunting and trapping

14 2. Limiting coyote trapping to existing trapping season for fox, raccoon, skunk,
15 opossum, weasel and other furbearing animals.

3. Any rulemaking by ODNR Division of Wildlife and/or decisions of the Ohio Wildlife Council regarding coyotes that would negatively impact or limit a farmer or landowner's ability to manage problem coyotes.

Deer

572

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ground Hog

573

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

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

Raccoon

574

We support:

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

Black Vultures

575

We support programs to reduce black vultures.

We oppose any permit fee to kill black vultures.

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

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

Feral Swine

576

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

We support:

1. ODNR establishing a multi-county task force to address reducing the feral swine population to protect the agricultural industry.
2. Making it illegal to import, maintain or hunt wild/feral hogs at private hunting preserves and/or releasing hogs to roam at-large.
3. The use of dogs to hunt feral swine.

- 8 4. A requirement of tracking and reporting feral swine populations to the Ohio
 9 Department of Natural Resources and zoonotic diseases to the Ohio Department of
 10 Agriculture to protect Ohio agriculture and livestock, natural resources, private
 11 property, human health and safety.

Bobcat**577**

- 1 We strongly encourage Ohio Division of Wildlife and Ohio Wildlife Council to
 2 implement an Ohio Bobcat Season.

Pollinators**578**

- 1 We recognize the ecological importance of pollinators.
 2 We support:
 3 1. Programs that increase the availability and additional planting of non-noxious
 4 pollinator forage on private, public management lands and right of ways.
 5 2. ODOT using highway medians for plants and wildflowers that will help pollinators.
 6 3. Additional landowner education regarding the value of pollinators and pollinator
 7 habitat
 8 4. Assistance to farmers who participate in pollinator habitat initiatives.

WEED AND PEST CONTROL**Weed and Pest Control****581**

- 1 We support enforcement of the law that requires highway departments, public utilities,
 2 governmental bodies, private citizens and corporations that own or lease land to control
 3 noxious weeds, pests and nuisances on their properties. We encourage these entities to
 4 follow best-recognized practices to prevent the translocation of noxious weeds.
 5 We encourage the establishment of a state task force responsible for developing a more
 6 effective noxious weed law.
 7 We encourage farmers to mow noxious weeds in time to prevent their seeding.
 8 We support control of all state listed noxious weeds, identified invasive and nuisance
 9 plant species and the continual review and update of the lists and will continue to seek
 10 adequate funding for research and control programs and notification at the point of sale.
 11 We oppose the sale of all state listed noxious weeds, identified invasive and nuisance
 12 plant species.
 13 We support the practice of reseeding roadsides to provide wildflowers or grass/legume
 14 cover and enforcing the eradication of multiflora rose on state, federal, county and township
 15 roadsides.
 16 We support monitoring of the federal executive order regarding non-native invasive
 17 species as to its impact on agriculture.
 18 We support the removal of abandoned orchards and vineyards through enforcement of
 19 current law and passage of additional legislation for control of pests and diseases that may be
 20 generated from these properties.
 21 We believe landowners should have the right to determine the frequency and timing of
 22 mowing CRP enrolled land.
 23 We support extensive farmer (harvester and hauler) education to help identify and
 24 eradicate Palmer Amaranth as well as all other noxious weeds and invasive species.

- 25 We support education programs for invasive species identification, control and financial
26 assistance.

REGIONAL ISSUES

Ohio River Watershed 590

- 1 We support:
- 2 1. The establishment of a multi-state collaborative effort to identify and prioritize 12
 - 3 digit hydrologic units for the development and implementation of 9 element
 - 4 watershed plans.
 - 5 2. The establishment of a series of demonstration sites to promote the most effective
 - 6 management practices to reduce the off-site transport of nutrients, sediment and mine
 - 7 drainage.

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 that is beneficial to individual farmers putting conservation practices on land to
4 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 regarding
2 the harvesting of timber.
- 3 We encourage Wayne National Forest to utilize funds for the development of recreational
4 facilities instead of the acquisition of additional land.
- 5 Wayne National Forest should maintain line fences with adjoining property owners who
6 are engaged in agricultural practices. If real estate taxes are not paid to local counties in the
7 Wayne National Forest area, the payments in lieu paid to counties should be comparable to
8 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 land
10 for the Wayne National Forest.
- 11 All revenues generated from commercial activities related to the forest shall be returned
12 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 by
3 the county commissioners of each respective county, or by election by the general public.
- 4 The MWCD should focus on its original purpose of water quality, flood control and
5 conservation.
- 6 The MWCD needs to return a portion of any assessment collected back to the county
7 where collected for conservancy district maintenance projects in that county.

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

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

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

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

16 MWCD should make public all of their expenditures.

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

19 We encourage MWCD to increase funding to apply conservation practices and increase
20 allowable acres to farmers, to help ensure water quality.

Great Lakes Water Resources

595

1 The Great Lakes are one of America's most important natural public treasures. Together,
2 the Great Lakes account for 90 percent of the United States' surface fresh water resources.
3 The Great Lakes states and Canadian provinces serve as stewards of this resource and have a
4 shared duty to protect, conserve and manage these renewable but finite waters. As a result,
5 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, reducing
9 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 the
11 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 Mexico
4 Hypoxia Action Plan (Action Plan). We believe that strategies to implement the goals and
5 objectives of the Action Plan must be developed and administered at local level. Any
6 policies made regarding implementation of the Action Plan must be based on sound scientific
7 data and must give proper consideration to the sustainability of a viable agbioresource
8 industry in the state of Ohio.

Blanchard River Watershed

597

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

3 We support widening narrow spots of "pinch points" along the river by constructing
4 benching of the riverbank, while leaving the channel untouched. This would allow for better
5 uniform flow and reduced the water velocity, thus slowing movement of sediment and
6 nutrients.

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 beneficial
9 land base use.

10 We support the restoration of state funding to match federal funds available for the
11 Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

Grand Lake St. Marys **599**

1 We support the actions of the agricultural community and their involvement in helping to
2 reduce nutrient run-off in the watersheds of Grand Lake St. Marys.