



Community Council Newsletter

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Hello Everyone,

We're entering a busy time of year. Field work takes priority; many of us are switching a meeting room seat with a tractor seat. When you find time to take a break, here's a few discussion guides that will make your community council sessions interesting.

Getting Involved in Policy Development

Your county Farm Bureau is already involved in policy development for 2024. Volunteer leadership is meeting with local governments, agencies and community stakeholders to identify issues and create draft policies for consideration at the County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. Group input is part of our grassroots approach that leads to the creation of policy positions that guide the Farm Bureau at local, state and national levels.

Farm Bureau has several opportunities where members can pursue their interests and discuss issues affecting agriculture, food production and their community. This guide explores how community stakeholders get involved in policy discussion, as well as highlights the Community Council's role in this process. We hope your group can provide valuable input to your county Farm Bureau Policy Development Committee, too. Additional information/materials on this subject include:

- *OFBF Website - Following the Policy Development Process:* Ohio Farm Bureau is the textbook definition of a grassroots organization. Policies and issues that the state's largest farm organization takes up on the behalf of agriculture are developed and voted on by its members. The process for putting future policies together started when Ohio Farm Bureau leaders began serving on the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation's Policy Development Committee. Meet two committee members and discover more about the process in this podcast hosted by OFBF's Director of Media Relations, Ty Higgins at: <https://ofbf.org/2020/09/28/ohio-weekly-ohio-farm-bureaus-policy-development-process/>
- *OFBF Website – 2022 Year in Review:* Members endured another year of challenges in 2022. Inflation aggravated the economy and kept costs of fertilizer, parts and fuel at skyrocketing levels throughout the year. Spring and summer rains delayed planting in some parts of the state, as labor shortages worsened and concerns about the supply chain continued unabated. Through it all Farm Bureau continued to advocate for agriculture in big and small ways – from fighting for priority issues such as landowner property rights and the next farm bill, to educating members about the need to study solar leases carefully. Take a look at Farm Bureau's key victories and organization highlights over the 2022 program year at <https://ofbf.org/2023/01/19/2022-year-in-review/>.
- *OFBF Website – 2023 Ohio Agriculture and Rural Communities Action Plan:* The agriculture sector continues to face a volatile economy. Meanwhile, development pressures from many different sources threaten the availability of farmland. The 2023 Ohio Agriculture and Rural Communities Action plan provides a blueprint for policymakers and Farm Bureau members to bolster Ohio's agriculture industry and our rural communities. More information on the Action Plan is at: <https://ofbf.org/2023/02/01/2023-ohio-agriculture-and-rural-communities-action-plan/>.

Carbon Credits and Climate Issues

We've explored this subject before; however, Farm Bureau volunteer leaders incorporated new policy at the 2022 OFBF Annual Meeting, warranting a revisit on the issue. Science involving climate change is simple, energy consumption and fuel use emits greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide, more heat is trapped in the

atmosphere, raising global temperatures and affecting the climate. Strategies addressing climate change are more complex. Community stakeholders on local, national and international levels are looking at agriculture to take a leadership position in carbon sequestration and related market programs to help address part of the issue.

Farmers throughout Ohio have been encouraged to enroll in carbon credit trading programs. How and under what standards should registries verify farm practices and programs upon which credits are based? What eligibility standards should govern grain production, forestry and animal husbandry practices in carbon credit creation? If a carbon credit buyer says, “show me the field, woodlot and pasture where these credits are based, what procedures will be in place to trace the sequestered carbon back to the source? Additional discussion resources include:

- *OFBF Website – Carbon 101:* On this episode of *Field Day* OFBF’s Director of Water Quality & Research, Jordan Hoewischer talks with Ohio Soybean Association Communications & Media Relations Manager, Julia Brown about the emerging carbon market and what farmers need to do to prepare for carbon sequestration programs in their area. This podcast is the first in a series that will help members understand the breadth and depth of carbon program options. More information can be found at: <https://ofbf.org/2021/07/20/field-day-with-jordan-carbon-101-julia-brown/>
- *OFBF Website – Carbon Markets & Potential Income for Farmers:* Join Independent Journalist and Retired *Farm & Dairy* Editor, Susan Crowell as she explores the issue. Farmers are used to getting paid for raising a quality product – soybeans, sweet corn, apples, peppers. But a farm’s value lies in its soils, too. What if farmers could get paid for building a quality soil? Just like markets for those soybeans, there’s now a small, but growing, commodity market for building and storing carbon in a farm’s soils. Theoretically, American soils could soak up more than 100 million tons of carbon annually. When it comes to markets, what exactly is carbon? Discover more about the issue at: <https://ofbf.org/2020/11/12/carbon-markets-potential-income-for-farmers/>
- *AFBF Website – Carbon Markets and Conservation:* One of the big stories today is how carbon trading could be the next big cash crop for farmers and ranchers. While the science is sound, farming practices are just one component of a complex process. Discover more about the issues with AFBF and Kansas Farm Bureau Media Manager, Greg Doering at: <https://www.fb.org/focus-on-agriculture/carbon-markets-and-conservation>.

Land Use Planning

Land use planning is a key issue for Farm Bureau members. It’s a precious resource and land should remain in production agriculture. This message that was loud and clear from our members coming out of our 104th annual meeting in December 2023. Pressures from housing, industrial, commercial and energy development will continue to mount across Ohio in a battle for highly productive ground. How should farmers implement and engage in a larger conversation about farmland preservation in our state? Additional discussion materials include:

- *OFBF Website – The Future of American Farmland:* Land is the critical starting point for resilient and regenerative food systems, but poorly planned development is paving over productive agricultural lands both in the U.S. and around the globe, according to a new report from American Farmland Trust. Find out more on the report through a podcast featuring OFBF’s Director of Media Relations, Ty Higgins and American Farmland Trust Midwest Regional Director, Kristopher Reynolds at: <https://ofbf.org/2022/08/08/our-ohio-weekly-the-future-of-american-farmland/>
- *OFBF Website – Foreign Ownership of U.S. Farmland:* Explore the past, present and future of federal and state laws as well as legislative proposals relating to foreign ownership of agricultural land on a podcast featuring OFBF’s Director of Media Relations, Ty Higgins and the National Agricultural Law Center Director, Harrison Pittman at: <https://ofbf.org/2021/11/15/our-ohio-weekly-foreign-ownership-us-farmland/>

- *Ohio's Country Journal Website – Land Use Planning an Underused Tool for Farmland Preservation:* While it is widely acknowledged that land use planning has implications for farmland, county-level land use planning remains an underutilized tool for farmland preservation. The award-winning Land Use Actions Project in Wayne County identified several ways to influence land use planning that still use voluntary approaches. Find out more about the project with Sustainable Economies Consulting, LLC CEO, Elizabeth Schuster at: <https://ocj.com/2022/01/land-use-planning-an-underused-tool-for-farmland-preservation/>

Remember, you are not limited to these materials - Feel free to discuss additional topics and issues generated from the local newspaper, other publications and/or key events happening in your neighborhood. Additional information on possible discussion topics and resources can be found on the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation website at <https://ofbf.org/tag/community-councils/>

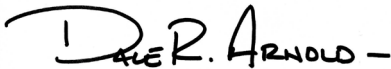
Keep in Touch with Farm Bureau

Need some additional help? Contact your county Farm Bureau office for assistance. Remember to send your council meeting forms and correspondence directly to your county Farm Bureau.

Many of Farm Bureau's action plans started with conversation around a kitchen table, living room or front porch; lively discussion continues to develop using web applications, too. Your participation as a community council member makes sure that our organization continues to focus on critical issues, create better policy and helps people work together to get things done.

We look forward to visiting with you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "DALE R. ARNOLD -". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line at the end.

Dale Arnold
Director, Energy, Utility & Local Government Policy
Ohio Farm Bureau Federation



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POLICY AND ISSUE DISCUSSION SHEET

Getting Involved in Policy Development

Participation Begins with Member Involvement

Farm Bureau is directed by its members. They define action programs, legislative priorities and regulatory positions on issues affecting farmers and rural communities through the organization's *policy development process*. Group discussion and input are the basic features of a grassroots approach that leads to the creation of policy positions that guide the Farm Bureau at local, state and national levels.

Farm Bureau members have several opportunities where members can pursue their interests and discuss current issues affecting agriculture, food production and their community. These include:

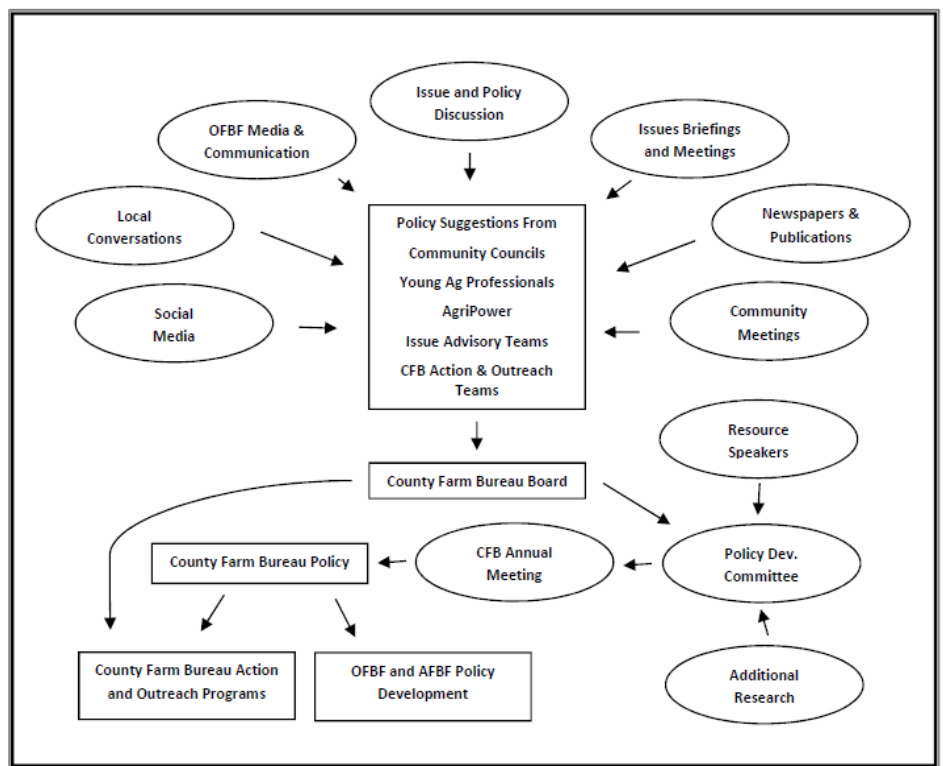
- ***Community Councils:*** Community Councils are groups that meet regularly to develop camaraderie and community while discussing farm and family topics. The council program began in 1936 and is unique to Ohio. Council members determine their own meeting schedule and gather regularly in each other's homes. Many Farm Bureau leaders can trace their initial involvement in Farm Bureau as a community council member.
- ***Action Teams and Outreach Committees:*** County Farm Bureaus provide avenues for local involvement, along with Membership, Public Policy and Communication Action Teams, county members support projects such as community gardens, on-farm dinner fundraisers, farm tours, local food experiences and more. County Farm Bureaus also host educational programs and briefings on topics such as taxes, CAUV, energy development and other community issues.
- ***Young Ag Professionals:*** The Young Ag Professionals (YAP) program is designed to provide leadership development and professional growth opportunities for Farm Bureau members who are age 18-35. This program hosts activities including the Winter Leadership Conference and Washington D.C. Leadership Experience and offers the Outstanding Young Farmer, Excellence in Agriculture and Discussion Meet contests. Connect on Facebook and sign up for the Growing our Generation e-letter. Many YAP groups meet on a regular basis to discuss issues and get involved in county Farm Bureau programs.
- ***AgriPOWER:*** AgriPOWER is an elite leadership program designed specifically for farmers and agribusiness professionals. This yearlong program focuses on public policy issues confronting agriculture and the food industry. It helps individuals develop the skills necessary to become effective leaders and advocates for agriculture. Many AgriPOWER alumni continue their involvement in Farm Bureau programs.

- **Issue Advisory Teams:** Farm Bureau members have the ability to engage with peers on a specific interest or issue as a member of an Issue Advisory Team. Team members may review, research, discuss, draft and recommend new policies, programming and/or activities addressing a specific interest area. They actively share their work with their county Farm Bureau president and board of trustees. Their input could be used by county Farm Bureaus to initiate programs at local, multicounty and state levels, too.

The primary line of communication in policy development is between members and their county Farm Bureau organization. Member groups are encouraged to identify a designated discussion leader and file a group membership roster with the respective county Farm Bureau office. Meeting Summary and Activity Sheets, as well as regular visits with the county Farm Bureau Board ensure communication between members and leadership.

Policy Development Committees Go to Work

Input, ideas and recommendations from membership groups are gathered by the county Farm Bureau Policy Development Committee. Committee members are selected and/or recruited by county leadership to meet, organize and further research ideas for presentation and consideration at their respective county Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. During the course of their work, Policy Development Committee members meet with additional community stakeholder groups, agribusiness leaders, service organizations and local government officials to gather additional ideas for policy consideration.



A State Policy Development Committee consisting of county Farm Bureau leaders and State Board members is formed by OFBF with the same mission and purpose. Approved county policies are forwarded and organized. Meetings with statewide stakeholders to gather additional input are held, and research is done by committee members. The results of their work are presented for consideration and approval by county Farm Bureau Annual Meeting delegates.

At the national level, the process is repeated again. A Policy Development Committee encompassing representatives from all states is used to establish policy recommendations for consideration and approval at the American Farm Bureau Federation Annual Meeting.

Creating Effective Policy

Farm Bureau's policy suggestions come from a variety of sources. Many great policy suggestions have been generated when neighbors talked with neighbors. Conversations over the fencerow, in the grain line, as well as in living rooms and other gathering places provide seeds for the policy development process. While the American and Ohio Farm Bureaus provide issues briefing sheets and discussion guides on a variety of issues, newspaper and magazine articles, social media posts, identification of emerging local issues at a civic meetings and open house programs are all within the realm of possibility. Farm Bureau members are encouraged to pick and choose the topic they wish to discuss when they get together.

Criteria that should be used to evaluate if an idea could make a good Farm Bureau policy recommendation include:

- Does the issue at hand directly affect agriculture and Farm Bureau's mission?
- Does it ask for or will it result in effective action?
- Is it forward-looking and progressive?
- Is the issue and suggested solution of high interest to members?
- Should the initiative suggested be supported and/or carried out by Farm Bureau?
- Do the Farm Bureau members discussing this issue believe the policy is needed?

Criteria that should be used in composing an effective Farm Bureau policy recommendation include:

- Stating the problem clearly and objectively.
- Identifying the result expected from taking action to address the issue; is it specific enough to establish a clear goal?
- Is the suggestion general and open enough to give members and other stakeholders latitude to create/employ several possible alternatives and strategies to address the issue?
- Will bringing the policy suggestion forward show other community stakeholders that Farm Bureau members and their leadership have duly considered the issue and support an effective remedy?
- Is the appropriate level of the organization (local, state or national) being enlisted to address the issue?

Discussion Questions

1. List any county, Ohio and/or American Farm Bureau policy that your council wishes to have submitted to your county Policy Development committee for consideration.
2. As well as using Ohio and American Farm Bureau briefing and discussion materials, what other sources of information could be used to spark effective policy development discussion?
3. List community stakeholders (service organizations, business leaders, local officials, etc.) your group would like to see contacted by the county Farm Bureau Policy Development Committee to surface additional ideas for policy development.
4. How do your group members want to work with county Farm Bureau leadership to get further involved in local policy development committee activities?



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POLICY AND ISSUE DISCUSSION SHEET

Carbon Credits and Climate Issues

Defining the Issue

Discussions surrounding the topic of climate change remain frequent and is often a difficult and challenging topic for the agriculture community to navigate. Strategies addressing climate change can be even more complex and often controversial. Community stakeholders on local, national and international levels are looking at agriculture to take a leadership position in carbon sequestration and related market programs to help address part of the issue.

OFBF Policy – Carbon Credits and Climate Issues 502

We support:

- A voluntary market-based carbon credit trading system with clear, science-based and consistent standards for calculating the amount of carbon sequestered by agricultural practices that is not detrimental to other agricultural producers, provides credits for previously implemented practices that sequester carbon, and accounts for regional ecological differences.
- Compensation to farmers for future, current and past activities such as planting crops, managing native and tame grasslands, planting and managing forestland or adopting farming practices that keep carbon in the soil or plant material or improve water quality, or water-use efficiency.
- Fair and equitable compensation, adequate legal protection and liability limits for program participants.

AFBF Policy - Climate Change 503

We Support:

- Contracts for carbon credits being negotiated with a minimum length of time and containing no penalties for non-performance due to weather or other acts of God;
- Third-party verification for carbon credits being done by an entity with knowledge and expertise in the agricultural industry. Farmers and ranchers should own and obtain their data being examined;
- Entities making improvements in their facilities to offset their carbon footprint, rather than buying credits to offset the carbon;

- Agricultural lessees/permittees of federal or state lands having priority to sell carbon credits from those lands instead of governmental entities;
- The insetting of carbon for carbon credits within the value chain of an agricultural operation.

We Oppose:

- The sale of carbon credits from state or national park lands;
- Industrial carbon capture and sequestration pipelines qualifying for any additional tax credits or government-subsidized carbon credits.

AFBF Policy – Research 461

We support research that identifies the advantages and disadvantages of carbon credits as it relates to carbon sequestration with USDA serving as the lead agency on researching carbon sequestration.

Policy Backgrounder

Carbon markets are not new. Sanctioned “cap-and-trade” systems assign allowances to businesses on how many metric tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) they can emit. Those who emit less or provide resources to sequester more CO₂ than their annual allotment can sell recognized credits to others, pushing everyone to cut emissions faster. The European Union Emissions Trading System (EEX) the California Air Resources Board and the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) in the eastern U.S. have been linking buyers and sellers of carbon credits for nearly two decades. Futures contracts offered by exchanges across the globe give these markets an international reach but more work needs to be done to make a truly global market exchange operational.

The main international carbon market scheme existing today was set up under the U.N.’s 1997 Kyoto protocol. Under that agreement, developed countries had targets to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, but developing countries did not. So, if a developing country reduced its emissions by creating effective power generation, fuel use and/or environmental mitigation policies, they could sell “credits” to a developed country, which could count that emission reduction in its own target.

Several developed nations site that the Kyoto protocol allows for “double-counting” of emissions reductions; calling question to the underlying value of credits and weakening the system. The Paris Climate Accord calls for rule revisions where all nations have emissions reduction targets.

Meanwhile, Midwest farmers are being approached to actively participate in carbon exchange activities. Several farm service, market brokerage and/or aggregation firms are inviting farmers to actively employ carbon sequestration practices (conservation and/or no-till cultivation, cover crops and other techniques) to use their farm fields to sequester carbon long-term. These practices translate to selling carbon credits based on the number of acres engaged and/or metric tons of carbon stored in their fields.

Just like cash grains and livestock, sequestered carbon needs to be genuine, authentic and commodity-based. Carbon credits will be seen as *Verified Emissions Reduction Securities (VERS)* if they meet the following standards:

- **Additionality:** Going beyond what is normal; ensuring that efforts are above and beyond regular processes already present through common practices.
- **Leakage:** Creating formulas/mitigation buffers to account for adverse impacts where offsets in one area do not undo efforts in another area.
- **Permanence:** Establishing an acceptable time period in which the security will have intrinsic value and expiration.
- **Monitoring:** System to inspect, audit and insure that the underlying materials/activities leading to the value of the VERS are actually there.
- **Registry Service:** An accredited infrastructure is in place providing links between farmers, brokers and exchanges. The platform should be regulated by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) and/or Securities Exchange Commission.

Discussion Questions

1. How and under what standards should registries verify practices and programs upon which credits are based; in other words, if a carbon credit buyer says, “show me the dirt,” what procedures will be in place to trace the sequestered carbon back to the actual farm field? How will that data be protected?
2. Should there be one registry for all environmentally based credits, or should specific practices, needs and requirements be based on state, regional, national and international standards?
3. Should a government agency have jurisdiction over these systems; whose authority (state, national, international) supersedes whom?
4. Should these systems be driven by the private sector? Do checks and balances need to be in place to ensure farmers are treated consistently and fairly?
5. How would your council define the “balance” between economic and environmental benefits concerning carbon trading?
6. Issues concerning climate change are complex and intertwined with carbon credit trading. How do your council members define *climate change*? How should Farm Bureau leaders be involved in climate change discussions on local, state and national levels?



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POLICY AND ISSUE DISCUSSION SHEET

Land Use Planning

Defining the Issue

Land use planning is a key issue for Farm Bureau members. To best describe the situation, let's take a look at commentary brought forward by OFBF Executive Vice President, Adam Sharp in "Across the Table," *Our Ohio Magazine*, March -April 2023.

Ohio farmland is precious and should remain in production agriculture. That was a message that was loud and clear from our members coming out of our 104th annual meeting in December 2023. The Ohio Farm Bureau team and our volunteers will relay that same message to lawmakers in Columbus and Washington, D.C. throughout the year. According to American Farmland Trust, over 500,000 agricultural acres will be taken out of production and converted to both urban and highly developed uses and low-density residential uses by 2040.

There are many different ideas as to how to protect the farmland we have in Ohio which, by the way, is almost half of the state. One of those is the Ohio Department of Agriculture's Farmland Preservation Program. Since its inception, the program has helped 589 family farms in 61 counties preserve 91,507 acres in agricultural production. Currently, this important program faces legal challenges when it comes to development and eminent domain. Our members see the value in this program and the need to preserve it, so they are calling for the support of additional funding for the Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (LAEPP) to help meet the growing demand for farmland preservation efforts.

Another way to keep farmland viable is to have a plan for what happens to that land once the next generation takes over. Nationwide's *Land as Your Legacy* program can help families have a clear vision for the long-term future of the farm. Many of us wish to see the farm continue for many years to come, but it is only a wish until you put it in writing. You can find out more by visiting with your local Nationwide representative.

In addition to those programs, the most effective way to protect Ohio farmland is to keep farms strong. If agricultural production is supported by lawmakers, farms will be sustainable. If the farm economy is working, those farms will thrive. And if those farms belong to an organization that is vigilantly protecting their best interests, like Ohio Farm Bureau, farm families will succeed.

There is no doubt that pressures from industry, investors, energy and sprawl will continue to mount across Ohio in a battle for highly productive ground. Perhaps it is time once again for a larger conversation about farmland preservation in our state, as each acre taken jeopardizes future food production and food security for our nation.

Farm Bureau will work diligently to find ways to help our state's economy and population grow, while maintaining the land and resources to continue to feed both.

OFBF Policy - Land Use Planning 431

We support:

- 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.

- The development of countywide, comprehensive land-use plans as an integral part of farmland preservation. Local control and local involvement should be emphasized.
- 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:
 - Agriculture Easement Purchases - Investigation, development and implementation of additional 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.
 - Agriculture Easement Donations - Research, funding and implementations of voluntary programs to keep land in agricultural use.
 - 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.
 - Agriculture Security Areas - Those operations that meet the definition of agriculture as currently defined in Ohio law, regardless of size, production method, or business structure, should be designated agriculture, not commercial.
 - Local and State Land Use Policies - We recommend programs to address the following issues:
 - Land use decisions made locally with adequate rural participation in sub-division regulations; Recognition of basic property rights of individuals. State law or regulation should not take away the economic value of property without fair compensation;
 - Effective zoning to meet the needs of rural Ohio. We recognize the challenges being made to agricultural practices by zoning commissions and encourage members to fight these challenges and continue to support agriculture's exemptions from Ohio's zoning laws including efforts to educate local zoning and building officials on agriculture's exemptions;
- We encourage the development of educational programs to improve the understanding of farmland preservation and land-use issues. Some topics of importance are:
 - Economic impact of the loss of prime farmland.
 - Conservation Stewardship Programs and Carbon Credit Programs.
 - Economic importance of agriculture business and agriculture related businesses of local economics.
 - The recognition by local zoning that animal husbandry includes the care and keeping of any animals not deemed wild and dangerous.
 - The recognition by local officials that occasional, limited private gatherings in agricultural buildings, without the payment of a fee to the owner, should not disqualify that agricultural building from any applicable building code exemptions for agriculture.
- We support additional funding for Ohio Department of Agriculture's Clean Ohio Local Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (LAEPP) to help meet demand and better reflect agricultural easement values.
- We oppose efforts to impose the installation of riparian buffers through zoning because it is a taking of private property.

AFBF Policy – Land Use Planning 201

We believe that land use planning can best be accomplished at the county or comparable level of government and by private landowners. Adequate returns on investment from agricultural land and tax incentives for production agriculture are the most effective methods of preserving production of food and fiber.

We support:

- Requiring all lands, including state and federal lands, being subject to all provisions of local land use planning ordinances that do not adversely affect private property rights or the selective restraint of commerce;
- Legislation preventing an agency from controlling the use of lands by proclamation;
- The use of incentives to encourage commercial reuse or redevelopment of existing business or industrial sites rather than new undeveloped site;
- The following safeguards in any land use plan:
 - Representation of agricultural producers on all planning and control boards;
 - The right of appeal by an individual landowner at all levels, especially the local level;
 - Protection for private ownership rights;
- The voluntary transfer of development rights to limit farmland conversion;
- Continued funding of the Forest Legacy Act;
- Conservation easements for less than perpetuity to be available to farmers and ranchers with a federal tax deduction.

We oppose:

- The continued encroachment of federal and state agencies and local governments on agricultural and forest lands;
- Federal legislation and agency policy which would impose land use regulations as a qualification for federal grants and loans;
- Any effort to establish buffer areas without just compensation around parks, preserves or other areas being protected for their environmental or ecological value;
- The formation or expansion of any state or federal wildlife refuges, recreational, conservation or wilderness areas which result in a net loss of private lands;
- The creation of a national wildlife refuge by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service without congressional approval;
- State or national wildlife refuges, recreational or conservation areas impeding the existing natural and artificial drainage systems of landowners in the watershed;
- Compliance with Natural Resources Conservation Service standards as a requirement in any farmland protection program;
- Arbitrary limitations in the federal Farmland Protection Program that may discourage participation or impair state or local initiatives;
- Federal assistance to states for land use planning.

Discussion Questions

1. Four areas identified for competitive, ongoing growth in Ohio involve housing, industrial, commercial and energy development. Which of these sectors is/are the major competitor(s) for land acquisition in your neighborhood?
2. Farm Bureau policy advocates a collaborative “grass roots” approach and community stakeholder involvement in neighborhood. What do you consider the benefits and points for concern on this position? Should local government be given more direct control and decision making on local land use? How could additional local control impact agricultural land uses?
3. How are council members involved with land use planning in their communities? Is your community zoned? Is there a comprehensive land use plan in place for your county, and are you familiar with it?
4. New Farm Bureau policy advocates creation of an impact fund for the purchase of conservation easements to offset the loss of farmland for development of energy projects. (OFBF Policy – Wind and Solar 148). Should this policy be extended to include purchases from developers for housing, commercial and industrial projects?