



## **PURPOSE OF FARM BUREAU**

Farm Bureau is an independent, non-governmental, voluntary organization of farm and ranch families united for the purpose of increasing net farm income by analyzing their problems and formulating action to achieve educational improvement, economic opportunity, and social advancement and thereby, to promote the national well-being. Farm Bureau is local, county, state, national, and international in its scope and influence and is bi-partisan, non-sectarian, and non-secret in character. Farm Bureau is the voice of agricultural producers at all levels.

## **FARM BUREAU VISION**

Lead a growing and dynamic agriculture.

## **FARM BUREAU MISSION**

Lead the farm and rural community through legislative representation, education, public relations, and leadership development.

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## DAIRY

**Antibiotics** -- All bulk tank milk samples should be preserved until any and all problems arising from preliminary screening and testing have been completely resolved. We urge that dairy plants use a standardized test, with realistic levels, for antibiotic testing.

**Dairy 2020** -- We support Dairy 2020, which has the mission of trying to strengthen Wisconsin's dairy industry. We support allowing herds of all sizes to participate in the milk volume program.

**Fees** -- We oppose automatic increases in dairy fees and support a reduction in the proposed increase in fees.

**Inspections** -- We believe that state inspections are an important part of a quality dairy industry. However, the frequency and extent of individual farm inspections should be in direct relations to the quality of milk being produced on each farm. An existing well, which is producing safe water, should not, because of its location, force a producer off the Grade A market.

**Labeling** -- We urge that only cheese manufactured in the state allowed to be labeled as Wisconsin cheese.

We oppose milk processors rejecting milk from cows treated with rBST.

**Promotion** -- We support the efforts of the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board and its funding for dairy promotion and product development purposes.

**Vending Machines** -- We encourage all schools in the state to have milk vending machines in order to make milk available throughout the school day. We believe WMMB should provide financial incentives for the placement of these machines in schools.

## EDUCATION

**Ag Education** -- We support having agricultural courses in the local school curriculum. We encourage school districts to revise their agricultural curriculum to a level where credits in agriculture courses can be utilized as a science credit. We urge revision in the teacher certification requirements to allow for dual certification in agriculture and science for education majors graduating in Wisconsin.

**Ag in the Classroom** -- We support more education on modern agriculture and food production at the elementary and secondary levels.

**Ag Research** -- We support increased funding of agricultural research. We favor biotechnology research that is properly monitored with reasonable safety, social and economic standards being followed prior to and during implementation of the research.

We recommend that the University place more emphasis on applied research for the benefit of production agriculture. We support continued public and private research for "new uses" of farm commodities and alternative crops, including industrial hemp. Agricultural research should take nutritional value into consideration when developing new crop varieties, not just yield and appearance.

We support maintaining the USDA Forage Research Center at the Badger Ammunition Plant.

**Elementary & Secondary** -- Elementary and secondary education is essential to the development of the individual. Local school boards are being forced to comply with additional state and federal standards to qualify for aids. We believe these regulations erode the rights of local citizens and divert attention from the basic educational needs of our youth. We support legislation that will return control of education to the local boards of education and the citizens they represent.

1 We believe that school boards should not approve higher spending for school operation and maintenance than  
2 was approved at the annual meeting. We suggest that a special meeting be called by the school board if they  
3 significantly exceed the budget adopted at the annual meeting.

4  
5 We oppose state mandated pre-school programs. We recommend that the school calendar and school day  
6 remain a local decision.

7  
8 We support student competency testing programs and widespread publication of those results. Further, we  
9 believe that teachers should be required to demonstrate their competency prior to entering and during their  
10 teaching career.

11  
12 We oppose the creation of school districts through forced consolidation of outlying districts into metro  
13 districts. As many refugees have special educational needs that place an additional burden on the property tax,  
14 we urge that funding of their special education be the responsibility of the federal government.

15  
16 **School Aids** -- We believe that the net income of taxpayers in a school district should be a factor in the state  
17 school aid formula. We support maintaining state funding to school districts with declining enrollment.

18  
19 **Technical College System** -- Technical College System tuition should more closely reflect the costs  
20 associated with the program being offered. Since the technical college system is financed by a tax levy, we  
21 support having technical college boards elected.

22  
23 The technical college system should continue to serve the needs of the farm community. We favor the  
24 development of closer coordination between post high school vocational and academic education programs to  
25 better utilize our educational facilities.

26  
27 **UW System** -- We support programs to enhance the capability of our Colleges of Agriculture to respond to the  
28 educational and research needs of farmers, which ultimately benefits all of society. We believe that all credits  
29 should be transferable within our state university system.

30  
31 We urge the continuation of a strong UW-Extension agricultural program in Wisconsin. We also urge county  
32 boards to appoint an UW Extension user group advisory board. Members should be appointed by UWEX user  
33 groups and be voting members of the committee.

## 34 35 36 ENERGY

37  
38 **General** – We support a state and national energy policy which includes energy conservation, increased  
39 domestic production and marketing of renewable fuels and energy, including but not limited to ethanol, bio-  
40 diesel, crop based fuels, methane, water, wind, and solar.

41  
42 We support the construction of new generation coal-fired power plants in areas of the state experiencing  
43 expanding electrical demands in order to eliminate the need for long distance transmission lines and to ensure  
44 adequate electricity at an affordable price.

45  
46 We support the rebuilding and maintenance of existing dams for hydroelectric power and flood control  
47 purposes.

48  
49 **Alternative Sources** - We support research and incentives to encourage alternate sources of energy, including  
50 ways of converting farm wastes and other farm products to energy. We support agriculture based renewable  
51 energy. We support additional emphasis and research regarding the use of refuse for energy production in  
52 order to more efficiently use waste materials.

53  
54 To help encourage a new industry startup in Wisconsin, we support legislation providing direct tax credits to  
55 manufacturing plants here in the state producing ethanol and other alternative fuels. We support funding for

1 the expansion of biobased products for energy like ethanol and bio-diesel and other clean energy sources.

2  
3 We encourage filling stations with multiple fuel pumps to have at least one pump with a percentage of  
4 renewable fuel such as ethanol and bio-diesel. We support requiring all gasoline to contain 10% ethanol. We  
5 support exempting gasoline containing 85% ethanol from the state gas tax with a sunset provision after seven  
6 years.

7  
8 We support legislation to mandate the use of ethanol, E-85, or bio-diesel in all school buses, and all other  
9 taxpayer supported vehicles.

10  
11 **Electrical Transmission & Distribution System** – We support the modernization and maintenance of lines,  
12 equipment and facilities for all utilities in order to meet current and future demands and alleviate electrical  
13 quality problems.

14  
15 We support requiring utilities to comply with Wisconsin State Electrical Codes.

16  
17 Further, we support requiring the PSC to establish a timeline when the earth can no longer be used as a  
18 primary neutral return path. During that time, we support expanded research and development of alternative  
19 distribution systems to replace the current multi-grounded neutral system.

20  
21 We oppose proposed high voltage power lines running through private property when avoidable in all of  
22 Wisconsin. We support having all new lines run along roads and highways when possible.

23  
24 We support requiring wind farms to make payments to cover municipal services.

25  
26 **Electrical Quality** - We support continued efforts to address stray voltage, electromagnetic fields, electric  
27 fields, ground currents and other electrical quality problems. We urge expanded educational programs for  
28 farmers, veterinarians, electricians, equipment dealers, utility ag representatives and others regarding electrical  
29 quality concerns. We believe all utilities should be held accountable for electrical quality problems caused by  
30 their lines and equipment.

31  
32 We support establishing a state standard for determining stray voltage on a farm provided that the testing  
33 method is done without resistors at cow contact at peak to peak voltage at all frequencies.

34  
35 **Electrical Wiring on Farms** – We encourage livestock farmers to have isolators installed. We also encourage  
36 farmers to update the wiring on their farms to have a four wire system with a separate neutral and separate  
37 ground return. We support requiring the certified the inspection of new on-farm wiring.

38  
39 **Rural Electric Cooperatives** -- We reaffirm the unrestricted right and responsibility of all rural electric  
40 systems to serve those areas in which they initiate service and continue to serve. We strongly oppose the  
41 imposition of conditions or restrictions, which disadvantage the cooperatives in extending or continuing  
42 service in these areas.

43  
44 **Telecommunications** - All telecommunication facilities shall also be designed and constructed so that they  
45 comply with PSC rules.

## 46 47 48 **FARM FINANCE**

49  
50 **Beginning Farmers** – We support incentive programs (i.e. loans, tax incentives, and grants), through existing  
51 lending institutions and government agencies, that assist in the transfer or start up of a farm. We support  
52 allowing loan guarantees being extended to individuals providing land contracts similar to what is currently  
53 provided to lending institutions.

54  
55 **WHEDA** -- We support continuation of WHEDA loan programs to agriculture and agri-business.

1  
2  
3 **GENERAL GOVERNMENT**  
4

5 **Accountability** -- In the interest of maintaining accountability in our democratic form of government, we  
6 encourage our representatives in government to keep the laws and regulations of the land brief as possible and  
7 understandable to the common person. We support legislation denying all pensions, benefits, and retirement  
8 funds to any government official that is convicted of a felony crime while in office. We support more  
9 privatization of government services.

10  
11 **Cabinet Government** -- We support having the Governor appoint the Secretary of the Department of  
12 Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection and the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources.

13  
14 **County Boards** -- We support repeal of the law allowing county boards to change their size between each  
15 census.

16  
17 **County Fairs** -- We support restoring county fair premium funding by the state to at least \$850,000. We  
18 support having a county fair coordinator at DATCP.

19  
20 **Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection** -- We oppose transferring DATCP' consumer  
21 protection functions to the Department of Justice. We support establishing a one-stop shop for all permits  
22 needed for farms and agri-businesses.

23  
24 **Department of Natural Resources** -- We support requiring at least one DNR Board seat be occupied by a  
25 farmer.

26  
27 We believe that the names of individuals filing a complaint with DNR against a landowner should be disclosed  
28 to that landowner.

29  
30 We support a local approval process to hold the DNR responsible for their decisions at the township and  
31 county level.

32  
33 **Elections** -- We urge that all referendums should be written in simple and concise language to not confuse the  
34 voter. We favor the election of the county constitutional officers at the non-partisan spring elections. We  
35 believe that school, county and other local referendums should be offered only on regularly scheduled election  
36 days. We support uniform poll hours of 7 am to 8 pm throughout Wisconsin. We support requiring all voters  
37 to have a photo ID.

38  
39 We favor township elections where the supervisors are elected by staggered terms. We support raising the  
40 minimum percentage for a recall election of town officials to 50 percent of the voters in the last presidential  
41 election from 25 percent.

42  
43 We urge that the state Supreme Court be given the responsibility of redistricting.

44  
45 **Fences** -- We support the current state fence law. We oppose any general requirement that all streams or lakes  
46 must be fenced. We urge the DNR to comply with the state fence law.

47  
48 **Lawsuits** - We support legislation that protects the food industry from frivolous lawsuits by making  
49 consumers responsible for their eating habits.

50  
51 We oppose the use of tax money by any unit of government for litigation against farmers who have not been  
52 cited by a government agency for violating any laws or regulations.

53  
54 **Legal Notices** -- We support allowing legal notices to be published in non-subscription newspapers.  
55

1 **Mandated Programs** -- We believe that the costs of government mandated programs should be picked up by  
2 the unit of government which mandates the program.

3  
4 **Minimum Markup** -- We support the minimum markup law. E-85 blended fuels should not be subject to the  
5 minimum markup law.

6  
7 **Tort Reform** -- We support limits on the amount of compensation a person can receive for pain and suffering.

8  
9 **Veto Authority** -- We support limiting the Governor's line item veto to prohibit the transfer of funds from one  
10 project to another.

11  
12 **Volunteer Fire Departments & EMS** -- Due to lack of economic resources in rural fire protection districts,  
13 we oppose efforts that force the disbandment of volunteer fire departments and EMS units and mandate the  
14 hiring of fulltime employees.

## 15 16 17 **HEALTH & SAFETY**

18  
19 **Health Care** -- We support continued efforts to develop a comprehensive solution for affordable and  
20 accessible health care and health insurance that covers all residents. We support allowing farmers and their  
21 employees to enroll in the state health insurance program.

22  
23 We support every possible effort to better manage health care costs, while still providing accessible high  
24 quality care.

25  
26 We support the continuation of the Farmer's Health Cooperative.

27  
28 We support a requirement that all medical providers send an itemized billing to every recipient of medical  
29 services. We urge that insurance companies be prohibited from allowing health insurance groups mature  
30 without adding new business.

31  
32 We support tax deductible health savings accounts.

33  
34 We support changing Badgercare and HIRSP eligibility criteria to exclude depreciation from net taxable  
35 income.

36  
37 We support 100% deductibility from income taxes for long-term health care premiums.

38  
39 **Safety** -- We support educational programs on the safe use of farm equipment, handling of livestock and  
40 removal of hazards on the farm.

## 41 42 43 **HUNTING & WILDLIFE**

44  
45 **Bag Limits** -- Due to over population, we urge that daily bag limits be increased and more permits be issued to  
46 reduce deer, bear, geese and turkey populations. When deer management units are above their over-winter  
47 goal, we support instituting an earn-a-buck season or any other program with incentives to reduce the deer  
48 herd. We support an earn-a-gobbler season for turkeys.

49  
50 **Feeding & Baiting** -- We support banning deer feeding and baiting in order to prevent the spread of disease.

51  
52 We support requiring the DNR to plant crops on the land it owns to reduce crop damage on private land.

53  
54 **Hunting Regulations** -- We support the right to hunt, fish, trap, and to take game subject to reasonable rules  
55 and regulations. We support allowing crossbow hunting during the muzzleloader season. We support over the

1 counter sales for turkey licenses. Operating farmers should be issued a free deer, bear and turkey license and  
2 that the license be an open season license upon request to be used on the landowner's property.

3  
4 We support the right to protect domestic livestock or pets from predators.

5  
6 We support eliminating coyote protection from DNR deer hunting regulations.

7  
8 We support the carrying of a gun with the shells in the magazine (not the chamber) while entering and exiting  
9 the woods before and after posted hunting hours.

10  
11 **Hunting Seasons** – We support a season on Sandhill cranes and seagulls. We urge that the state eliminate the  
12 closed season on raccoon until the population is under control.

13  
14 **License Revocation** – We support a three year revocation of all sporting licenses for the following infractions;  
15 illegal shining, trespass, and causing injury to livestock.

16  
17 **Roadkill** – We recommend that DNR be responsible for the removal of large undomesticated “roadkill”  
18 carcasses from highway right-of-ways. All wildlife hit by vehicles should become property of the driver if he  
19 or she chooses, without charge to that person.

20  
21 A property owner should be able to dispose of a dead deer that is on their property without applying for a  
22 permit to move the carcass.

23  
24 **Shining** - We support banning the shining of wildlife from public roads between September 1 & December 31.

25  
26 **Wildlife Damage Program** – In certain areas of the state, excessive wildlife population is causing a severe  
27 loss of crops and income for farm families. We recommend the following action be taken in these areas.

- 28
- 29 • General – Landowners enrolled in the program should be permitted to charge a fee for recreational use  
30 purposes. Tree farmers should be eligible to receive crop damage payments. Farmers and aquaculturists  
31 should be able to harvest animals causing crop and livestock damage. We support eliminating the  
32 September 15 deadline for wildlife damage permit performance standards.
  - 33
  - 34 • Funding – We support increased hunting license fees and/or general purpose revenues when necessary to  
35 fund damage claims at 100%, since state residents as a whole favor a large state wildlife population.  
36 Wildlife Damage Program funds should be used only for payment to farmers for crop damage and  
37 abatement.
  - 38
  - 39 • Hot Spot Shooting and Nuisance Permits– We support continuing the “hot spot” shooting permit program  
40 to allow the additional harvest of deer on farms suffering chronic damage and establishing a “hotspot”  
41 shooting permit program for farmers to harvest Sandhill cranes. Nuisance permits should be issued for  
42 bear when crop or livestock damage exceeds \$500.
  - 43
  - 44 • Non-game and protected species – We support extension of WDP coverage to protected non-game species.  
45 Further, we support the removal of seagulls and Sandhill cranes from the protected list.
  - 46
  - 47 • Payments – Property that receives crop damage payments should be open to the public for hunting of that  
48 particular species, with hunter access controlled by the landowner. Further, we support WDP participant  
49 farmers receiving a payment of \$50 to \$100 per deer registered with animal damage tags. Farmers should  
50 be able to collect 100% of assessed crop damage on rented land where the landowner will not allow  
51 hunting to fulfill abatement program shooting requirements. Farmers should be compensated for their  
52 time and labor needed to participate in the program. Producers should be reimbursed for crops that are  
53 damaged by government personnel to gain access to trapped bear and other wildlife.
  - 54

55 **Wildlife Introduction** – We support a requirement that the DNR and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conduct

1 an agricultural impact statement before any species of wildlife is introduced into a new area and distribute the  
2 results to local landowners. If the species is introduced, DNR should be required to pay for any crop and  
3 livestock damage resulting from such action.

4  
5 We support a financial penalty to any person found introducing a non-typical games species into the wild.  
6 Further, we support the eradication of non-typical game species outside the confines of a licensed game farm.

7  
8 We oppose the introduction of elk to the central forest area. However, if introduced, we support allowing  
9 animals causing damage to be harvested.

10  
11 **Wildlife Population** – We support reducing the deer herd to at least DNR goals. The DNR should not have an  
12 “over winter” goal of more than 25 deer per square mile in any deer management area. Further, we support  
13 increasing the yearly goose harvest in proportion to flock growth to reduce the over winter population.

14  
15 We support requiring DNR to accurately reflect wildlife populations and the damage being done in Wisconsin.  
16 We support appropriate actions to reduce populations.

17  
18 **Wolf Management** –We support keeping the wolf population at or below 350 in Wisconsin. We support  
19 requiring DNR to include farmer participation in wolf management planning.

20  
21 We support full reimbursement to farmers for all direct and indirect damage caused to their farms by wolves.  
22 This includes reimbursement for missing livestock where there is evidence of wolves or a history of  
23 wolf/livestock conflicts on that farm.

24  
25 We support hunting and/or trapping seasons for wolves in areas where wolf/livestock conflicts exist, once the  
26 wolf is de-listed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service for the Endangered Species list.

## 27 28 29 **LABOR**

30  
31 **Christmas Tree Farmers** -- We request that the Department of Workforce Development include Christmas  
32 tree farmers in the definition of agriculture under our labor laws.

33  
34 **Mediation/Arbitration** -- We believe contract negotiations with teachers and other local government  
35 employees should be a local responsibility. We urge the repeal of final and binding arbitration. Until this is  
36 accomplished, we support reform of the existing law to provide greater balance between labor and  
37 management in this process.

38  
39 **Minimum Wage** -- We oppose increasing the state minimum wage or any other labor requirements beyond  
40 those required federally.

41  
42 **Workers Compensation** -- We support maintaining the minimum number of employees under workers  
43 compensation at 6 and increasing the minimum days required from 21 to 60.

## 44 45 46 **LAND USE**

47  
48 **Annexation** -- We support state legislation that will allow only the annexation of land owned by the  
49 petitioners. We support greater township control over the annexation of property and urge more boundary  
50 agreements among municipalities.

51  
52 We support requiring a municipality that annexes land from a neighboring township to pay off the township  
53 debt allocated to that land as part of the annexation.

54  
55 **Eminent Domain** – Eminent domain laws should not be used to confiscate private property for private uses or

1 private gain.

2  
3 Eminent domain proceedings should be used only when there is a preponderance of evidence indicating that  
4 the project is necessary for public service. Under current statutes, in the event of forced farm sales involving  
5 the right of eminent domain, the farmer must take the proceeds in one lump sum incurring higher income and  
6 capital gains taxes. Therefore, we urge that the law be changed at both the state and national levels to allow  
7 payment to be deferred at the option of the seller. Property taken should be priced at current market value plus  
8 relocation costs.

9  
10 We support changing the wording of Wisconsin's eminent domain law from "for the public good" to "for the  
11 public necessity." Further, we support a definition of "public necessity" as "that without which the public  
12 health and safety would be endangered."

13  
14 We support using state eminent domain laws rather than federal condemnation procedures in siting gas  
15 pipelines. We believe that eminent domain projects should be required to utilize public land as much as  
16 possible.

17  
18 We support requiring land owners affected by eminent domain projects to be notified and given the  
19 opportunity to participate in any negotiated agricultural mitigation agreements. Any agricultural mitigation  
20 agreement should contain an enforcement clause with a sufficient non-compliance penalty.

21  
22 **Local Planning & Zoning** -- We are concerned about the loss of productive agricultural lands. Haphazard  
23 growth of the urban community results in high costs of public services, conflicts between urban and rural  
24 landowners, and the destruction of precious resources. We urge farmers to become informed about and  
25 involved in local plan development and zoning ordinances that will help avert these problems and preserve the  
26 agricultural base of the community. We need to educate state agencies on the importance of preserving  
27 productive ag land for the production of food, fiber, and fuel.

28  
29 We support the goals of the Smart Growth program provided the planning process continues to be locally  
30 controlled and the state provides adequate funding for the development of these plans in rural areas. We  
31 oppose state and federal regulation of land use.

32  
33 We encourage counties to adopt house density zoning for cluster development to help save productive  
34 farmland.

35  
36 We encourage municipalities to devise land use plans that minimize the loss of productive agricultural land  
37 and that achieve a balance between local goals and individual landowners financial needs. We recommend  
38 that these ordinances create exclusive agricultural zones in which farming is designated as the priority use and  
39 other users remain in these zones without recourse to abate the practices which are common to farming. We  
40 urge property owners be put on notice if their property is located in an area zoned for agriculture or if farms  
41 are located nearby.

42  
43 We urge the publication of proposed changes in zoning rules and ordinances with a reasonable time to allow  
44 the public to take action to correct any injustices. When government bodies are taking action on individual  
45 zoning changes, special assessments or other matters affecting the value of private property, the owner of the  
46 property and adjoining landowners should be notified in writing prior to meetings or hearings on the actions.

47  
48 We oppose extra-territorial zoning. We also support increasing the population threshold to 50,000 in order for  
49 cities to exercise extra-territorial zoning within a three mile radius.

50  
51 We support legislation to create charter towns.

52  
53 Zoning and land use plans should apply to government bodies as well as private individuals.

54  
55 We support allowing farmers to sell products, grown on their farm, at a location on their farm without having

1 to be rezoned. We support legislation allowing farmers to erect and maintain a professionally painted sign on  
2 their property to advertise their farm produce. This would take precedence over town or county ordinances  
3 prohibiting such signage on farmer owned property.  
4

5 We recommend that local units of government not be permitted to regulate USDA licensed and inspected  
6 kennels.  
7

8 We recommend that if a farm is zoned agricultural and has a USDA or state licensed and inspected  
9 kennel/breeding operation that this activity be fully viewed as a part of the agribusiness on the farm.  
10

11 **Property Rights** -- We reaffirm our belief in the rights of private property ownership, and in the ability of  
12 landowners to make wise land use decisions. We support legislation requiring any governmental entity to  
13 compensate property owners when its actions reduce property values.  
14

15 We support legislation to facilitate the recovery of financial loss for nuisance lawsuits for time, attorney fees,  
16 and lost income for not being able to develop ethanol plants, wind farms, water plants, generating plants and  
17 livestock facilities.  
18

19 **Public Land** -- We support a public policy which would require all public agencies to use lands which are less  
20 valuable for agricultural use for public projects. We believe that land should only be acquired by the  
21 government for truly public purposes, and any government owned lands which are not used for public  
22 purposes should be returned to the former or adjacent property owner. We support requiring state agencies  
23 that buy land to notify all local units of government affected by the land purchase at least sixty days in  
24 advance. State and federal agencies purchasing land should have to justify the price paid when they outbid  
25 private landowners.  
26

27 When the DNR purchases agricultural land, the payment in lieu of property taxes should be calculated at the  
28 purchase price.  
29

30 We oppose allowing non-profit tax-exempt groups to buy property and then sell it to a governmental entity for  
31 a profit in the name of preservation.  
32

33 We support requiring DNR to sell two acres of land for every acre it purchases.  
34

35 We support a reduction in the stewardship program, prohibiting stewardship purchases of tillable land and  
36 targeting program purchases to non-agricultural land. We recommend that agricultural land currently owned  
37 by the DNR be leased back to farmers at local rates and under local customs. DNR should not be allowed to  
38 bond for land purchases.  
39

40 We support limiting the amount of land owned or controlled by all units of government to no more than 20  
41 percent of the land in a township. Units of government should be held accountable for all services that are  
42 required for the land.  
43

44 **Purchase of Development Rights** - We support efforts to target stewardship funds for the purchase of  
45 development rights of productive agricultural land.  
46

47 **Right-to-Farm** -- We support continued efforts which will protect agricultural operations from nuisance suits  
48 resulting from odor, dust, noise, etc. when the farming enterprise is operated in accordance with current  
49 agricultural practices. We also urge consideration of the role zoning, education, research and other activities  
50 may play in helping to prevent or alleviate these conflicts between differing land uses.  
51

52 We support amending the Right-to Farm Law to prohibit plaintiffs from applying public human health and  
53 safety standards to the environment. Further, we support strengthening the law by increasing the penalty for  
54 filing nuisance lawsuits found to have no merit. The punitive penalty should be equal to 50 percent of the  
55 producer's legal costs to defend himself/herself.

1  
2 We support having public agencies (town, county and state) that file nuisance lawsuits suits be held liable for  
3 defense costs in litigation where the case is found to have no merit.  
4

5 We support legislation to prohibit local units of government from regulating or banning the use or growing of  
6 biotech or genetically engineered crops or products.  
7

8 We support statewide uniform standards, provided they do not put us at a competitive disadvantage with other  
9 states, for farming operations rather than a patchwork of local and county ordinances. We believe that farmers  
10 should be able to operate and expand their farms as they choose as long as they comply with state and federal  
11 environmental regulations.  
12

13 **Surveying** - We recommend that all parties, but especially utility companies, use material other than metal to  
14 mark reference points on farm property.  
15

16 **Trespass & Liability** -- We support action to recognize and enforce ownership rights to prohibit unwanted  
17 activities on private property, including those of government agencies. We support requiring DNR wardens to  
18 enforce trespass laws.  
19

20 Landowners should not be held liable for those injured when using land, with or without permission. State law  
21 currently provides protection from liability for landowners that allow the recreational use of their land.  
22 However, we urge that the maximum amount of compensation allowed for recreational use under this statute be  
23 substantially increased.  
24

## 25 **LIVESTOCK**

26  
27  
28 **Animal Identification System** -- We support collaborative efforts of industry and governmental animal health  
29 officials to develop a national identification system for livestock. An animal ID system should be confidential,  
30 not create an additional paperwork burden and recognize that the original owner has no control over the animal  
31 once it leaves the farm.  
32

33 We oppose fees on producers to pay for livestock premise identification and support suspending the program if  
34 there is no federal or state funding for the program.  
35

36 **Animal Welfare** -- We support the right of farmers to raise livestock humanely and in accordance with  
37 commonly accepted agricultural practices since no segment of society has more concern for the well being of  
38 poultry and livestock than the producer. We also support animal-based medical research which benefits both  
39 humans and animals.  
40

41 We support enactment of stricter laws regarding the criminal release of animals used in agricultural production  
42 or for research purposes. Such crimes shall be punishable under organized crime laws.  
43

44 **Disease** -- We support the continuation of interstate testing for brucellosis of livestock from states that are not  
45 "class-free". We recommend stronger action be taken against those who violate brucellosis laws and  
46 regulations.  
47

48 We support increased funding for research to develop a better vaccine and test for Johne's disease. We  
49 support DATCP's Johne's testing and classification system. We support increased state funding for Johne's  
50 testing in livestock. We support allowing milk samples to be used as an official Johne's test.  
51

52 All animal health regulations, both domestic and wild, should be under DATCP's authority.  
53

54 We support holding government agencies with oversight over wildlife to the same animal health reporting  
55 requirements as the private sector.

1  
2 **Inspections** - We recommend that state regulations mirror USDA for the inspection and licensing of kennels.

3  
4 **Livestock Markets** -- We urge that livestock market reports reflect the number of cattle sold at the quoted  
5 prices. Animals sold for slaughter should have to be slaughtered.

6  
7 **Nonambulatory Livestock** – We support two classifications of nonambulatory livestock, 1) those due to an  
8 injury or accident, and, 2) those which are diseased. Nonambulatory livestock “due to an injury or accident”  
9 should be allowed to be slaughtered and processed for personal use.

10  
11 **Prescription Drugs** - We support legislation requiring veterinarians to make portable written prescriptions  
12 available to their clients.

13  
14 **Veterinarians** - We support an incentive program to encourage large animal study and practice in the state.  
15

## 16 17 **MARKETING**

18  
19 **Disparagement** -- Since false claims about food products can have a devastating impact on the livelihood of  
20 farm families, we support enactment of state disparagement legislation.

21  
22 **Poultry** -- We support increasing the state limit from the current 1,000 birds that can be farm processed  
23 without inspection to the federal limit of 20,000 birds.

24  
25 **Producer Security** -- We support a state's indemnity fund law that will enhance a producer's ability to recover  
26 losses due to the financial failure of a handler or processor; however we believe the following changes need to  
27 be made to the program.

- 28
- 29 • Eliminate the requirement for contingent financial backing
  - 30 • Cap the level of the fund and keep dairy, grain, and vegetable accounts separate. This keeps industry  
31 from subsidizing a failure in another.
  - 32 • Limit the purpose of APS fund to defaults due to business failure.
  - 33 • Allow all contractors who meet or exceed certain financial criteria to be exempt from the indemnity  
34 fund assessments.
  - 35 • Allow processors to post private security instead of participating in the program.
  - 36 • Cap assessment rates for each milk contractor at a rate determined by a simple average of the  
37 assessment rates over a three year moving average of program participation. This would stop milk  
38 buyers from being “punished” for revolving equity or expanding their business.
  - 39 • Require financial statements ordinarily used by the processor. Eliminate DATCP staff review of  
40 financial statements to save staff expenses.
  - 41 • Exempt producers that retain title to their commodities throughout the processing and sale of the  
42 finished products.
  - 43 • Interest from funds should go toward program costs to reduce fees.
  - 44 • Require DATCP to substantially reduce administrative costs.

45  
46 We believe that fresh produce should be paid for within 30 days of delivery.

47  
48 **Promotion** - We support the continued promotion of Wisconsin agricultural products through the use of  
49 labeling and special advertising.

50  
51 We support efforts to increase local direct marketing opportunities, including directing the state to give priority  
52 to Wisconsin products in their purchasing practices.

53  
54 We support and increase in the corn checkoff from \$.001 per bushel to \$.005 per bushel.

1  
2  
3 **NATURAL RESOURCES & THE ENVIRONMENT**  
4

5 **Ag Chemicals** -- We oppose a complete ban on the use of any agricultural chemical or drug unless it can be  
6 demonstrated positively by prolonged and responsible research that use of a product represents a clear and  
7 present danger to health or that its use would seriously jeopardize our environment. Serious consideration  
8 should also be given to the technical and economic feasibility of any bans or limitations on the use of  
9 agricultural chemicals.

10  
11 We support expanded programs to inform and educate the public on the need for agricultural chemicals. We  
12 support programs to require urban and suburban residents to properly use fertilizers and pesticides.  
13 We believe that compliance with federally approved label instructions when applying ag chemicals should  
14 make farmers immune from liability.

15  
16 We support returning the Agricultural Chemical Cleanup Fund to its original design, with half it's funding  
17 from user fees and half from the state general fund. We support reducing state fees for the cleanup fund to a  
18 more reasonable rate.

19  
20 We oppose requiring secondary containment for bulk fertilizer and pesticides stored on the farm.

21  
22 We support a continuation of the state's agriculture clean sweep program.

23  
24 We support public and private funded research that will result in less reliance on agricultural chemicals for  
25 weed and pest control.

26  
27 We support the cost-effective method of land spreading soils contaminated with low risk residues, such as  
28 petroleum distillates.

29  
30 **Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO)** - We oppose lowering the 1000 animal unit threshold  
31 requirement for concentrated animal facility operations (CAFO) to get a WPDES permit. We support  
32 requiring DNR and DATCP to use the federal animal unit calculation method in their rules and regulations.

33  
34 **Cost Sharing** -- We favor tax incentives and increased cost sharing of pollution abatement practices to  
35 encourage their use and to diminish potentially devastating costs.

36  
37 **Drainage & Water Law** - We support legislation to revise our laws pertaining to navigable waters to provide  
38 less regulation and insure that the riparian rights of landowners are better recognized. We support legislation  
39 creating a statutory definition for navigability. Navigability should be defined as a majority of the year and  
40 not one day. We believe that farmers should be able to maintain and upgrade farm drainage systems and  
41 ditches to protect the productivity of farmland.

42  
43 We support allowing drainage districts to maintain ditches in municipalities and on public lands and assess  
44 costs accordingly.

45  
46 We support requiring any entity allowing or causing the deterioration of water drainage systems that adversely  
47 affect other agriculture land to be held liable for the correction of that drainage system.

48  
49 We urge changes that would require municipalities to control storm water runoff to reduce the serious flooding  
50 and financial losses this water can cause downstream. We urge that municipal drainage holding ponds be  
51 fenced and other appropriate precautions be taken to prevent children from being attracted to them.

52  
53 We oppose DNR and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services interference with water control and construction of dams,  
54 including those on cranberry operations. We urge that aquaculture and cranberries be classified as water

1 dependant by DNR. We support legislation defining aquaculture as an agricultural activity.

2  
3 **Environmental Regulations** – State regulations, unless scientifically proven, should not be stricter than  
4 federal regulations. We support the use of consistent standards between all government agencies with respect  
5 to environmental issues. Any regulations should consider practical methods of maintaining environmental  
6 quality consistent with efficient and economical farming operations.

7  
8 Environmental incidents occurring when farmers have complied with accepted guidelines and regulations  
9 should be remedied at public expense.

10  
11 We support land conservation efforts but oppose using the property tax system as a punitive way to  
12 accomplish land conservation. We oppose counties setting per acre fees to fund land conservation  
13 departments.

14  
15 **Forestry** -- We support efforts to promote the proper utilization and management of our forest resources. We  
16 urge greater effort by the DNR to enforce compliance with the management contracts entered into under the  
17 Managed Forest Law.

18  
19 **Forest Cropland** – We support a fee payable to townships to offset the costs of providing fire protection and  
20 other services. We support having the managed forest program only offer contracts to land currently listed by  
21 the USDA Farm Service Agency as forestland. Cropland planted to trees should not be eligible for tax relief  
22 under the Managed Forest Law.

23  
24 **Groundwater** -- There is a need for increased monitoring, research and education relating to groundwater  
25 problems. We believe that the present law regarding the installation of high capacity wells serving  
26 municipalities should be amended to require that there be no adverse impact on the quality and supply of other  
27 local wells.

28  
29 **Invasive Species** - We urge the state to work closely with other states in the Midwest and the Great Lakes  
30 Basin to stop the spread of invasive species into Wisconsin.

31  
32 **Liability** -- We believe that the unknowing buyer of property should not be held liable for pollution caused by  
33 prior owners. When materials were legally disposed of in earlier years and are now found to be hazardous  
34 the previous owners should not be held liable.

35  
36 **Livestock Siting** - We support statewide uniform standards for livestock operations rather than individual  
37 county ordinances. Livestock siting regulations should not be more restrictive than the state's nonpoint  
38 standards. We support the use of scientifically proven BMPs to mitigate odor and address air emissions from  
39 livestock operations. We support reverse setbacks as a part of the state's livestock siting standards.

40  
41 **Non-point** -- Non-point pollution control efforts should be practical, scientifically based best management  
42 practices, rather than the lowest cost practices, and have adequate cost sharing in order for farmers to  
43 economically implement any required practices, including compensation for lost opportunity costs.

44  
45 We support conservation credit as part of the non-point program. We oppose any regulation that requires  
46 landowners to give an easement for public access in order to participate. We support allowing temporary  
47 manure stacking when weather conditions prevent spreading on eligible land.

48  
49 Any new nonpoint source pollution regulations should provide 70% funding for the cost incurred by farmers to  
50 implement these new regulations. Cost sharing should be provided if feed leachate runoff containment is  
51 required. We also support adequate funding to local units of government to implement the nonpoint program,  
52 provided that local regulations do not exceed state standards.

53  
54 We support allowing regional DNR offices to have short form authority to quickly permit Land Conservation  
55 Department and Natural Resource Conservation Service cost-share projects.

1  
2 We oppose the dumping of raw sewage by municipalities into lakes and waterways. We support requiring  
3 urban and suburban lands to meet similar nonpoint standards as agricultural lands.  
4

5 Snow containing road salt should be disposed of at least 300 feet from streams and 1000 feet from lakes.  
6

7 **Nonpoint & Air Quality Research** -- We support the Wisconsin Agricultural Stewardship Initiative, the  
8 Discovery Farms Program, and the UW-Platteville Pioneer Farm which were created to develop practical and  
9 affordable methods and techniques for complying with environmental standards.  
10

11 **Noxious Weeds** -- We support mandatory enforcement of noxious weed laws, on CRP lands, and land owned  
12 by lending institutions, absentee landowners and the government. We support the inclusion of multi-flora  
13 roses, purple loosestrife, and European buckthorn on the state's noxious weed list. Further, we support the  
14 creation of programs that would pay farmers to eradicate it.  
15

16 **Nutrient Management Plans** - We support allowing farmers to write their own nutrient management plans.  
17 We support an increase in funding to assist producers in writing the nutrient management plan.  
18

19 We support increased phosphate and potash levels for nutrient management planning due to higher yields and  
20 the ability of hybrids to better utilize these nutrients.  
21

22 **Nutrient Management Regulations-** We support reasonable state laws and regulations governing manure  
23 handling and runoff problems. We oppose a ban on the winter spreading of manure. Winter manure  
24 applications should be based on a farmer's nutrient management plan.  
25

26 **Recycling** – We strongly support more recycling. We urge that landowners be allowed to burn non-recyclable  
27 resources on their property.  
28

29 We support stricter enforcement of our current litter laws to reduce the losses incurred by farmers due to  
30 damaged equipment and injury to livestock.  
31

32 **Septic Systems** – We urge that new ideas for rural septic and water supply systems be tested and approved for  
33 use to expand the choices available for new installations. Residential septic inspection should be required  
34 every six years instead of every three years.  
35

36 **Wetlands** – We recognize the importance of preserving valuable wetlands and are concerned about the loss of  
37 these wetlands. We urge that the stringent regulations applied to farmers regarding wetlands be extended and  
38 enforced on all landowners, developers, municipalities, state and federal agencies on an equal and fair basis.  
39

40 We believe that a consistent set of definitions and guidelines need to be adopted for all wetlands. Further,  
41 wetlands that have been farmed should be allowed to remain in agricultural production.  
42

43 We believe that farmers' rights should be recognized in any wetlands legislation or regulations, including the  
44 right to maintain farm drainage systems and ditches. Any such legislation or regulations should compensate  
45 farmers for restrictions placed on any lands classified as wetlands.  
46

47 We urge that county regulations covering wetlands, flood plains and navigable streams be consistent with state  
48 regulations.  
49  
50  
51  
52

## 53 TAXATION

54  
55 **Assessment** -- We support use value assessment of agricultural land. We recommend that land dedicated to

1 conservation practices (i.e. wind breaks, buffer strips, etc.) or programs be assessed as farmland under use  
2 value. We support the 50% prorated assessment of undeveloped land and agricultural forestland.

3  
4 **Capital Gains** -- We support elimination of the state capital gains tax on the sale of the farm.

5  
6 We support allowing a taxpayer to defer taxes from the sale of agricultural property and machinery by  
7 investing the proceeds into a retirement account with taxes due at withdrawal.

8  
9 **Death Tax** -- We oppose reinstatement of the state death tax.

10  
11 **Depreciation** - We support adopting federal depreciation laws as part of state tax laws.

12  
13 **Farmland Preservation Program** - We support changing the FPP to create agricultural enterprise zones in  
14 which all types of production agriculture is allowed. Local units of government and landowners would receive  
15 financial incentives in return for a 15 to 20 year commitment. We believe that any FPP changes should allow  
16 those farmers with agreements to continue to receive credit.

17  
18 **Fuel Tax** -- We support the continuation of the state fuel tax exemption for agricultural purposes. We support  
19 requiring the Legislature to vote on any increase in the state fuel tax.

20  
21 **Investment Tax Credit** - We support expanding the state dairy and livestock investment tax credit to all  
22 agricultural facilities and equipment.

23  
24 **Lapses** -- We believe that when a fees or state tax is collected for a specific purpose that fund should not be  
25 transferred or raided for other uses.

26  
27 **Local Fees** -- We oppose counties implementing a general tax or fee on farmers or farmland to pay for county  
28 land conservation department programs or other county programs.

29  
30 **Lottery Tax Credits** -- We support continuation and expansion (i.e. including improvements) of the Farmland  
31 Tax Relief Credit, which is funded from lottery profits.

32  
33 **Property Taxes** -- We support continuation of two-thirds state funding for local school costs. We support the  
34 present system of semi-annual or annual payment of property taxes. We urge that all machinery and  
35 equipment (i.e. silos) on farms be exempt from taxation.

36  
37 **Sales Tax Exemption** -- We support sales tax exemptions on items used directly in farming operations.

38  
39 **Shared Revenues** - We support having shared revenues distributed as equally as possible between towns,  
40 villages and cities.

41  
42 **Special Assessments** -- We support extending current sewer and water assessment protection provisions for  
43 farmland located within towns to farmland located within cities and villages. We also support expanding this  
44 protection to include unwanted road improvements.

45  
46 **Spending Caps** -- We support legislation or a constitutional amendment limiting the amount of taxes or fees  
47 that can be levied and/or establishing spending caps for all units of government.

48  
49 We support limiting the amount of property taxes that can be levied by all units of government. We support  
50 maintaining the current caps on school spending. We recommend that school-spending limits should not be  
51 decreased if a school does not spend up to its limits in any year. We oppose exceeding levy limits, except by  
52 referendum.

53  
54 **Tax Exempt Real Estate** -- We urge that all tax-exempt real estate at least be required to make a payment for  
55 municipal services (i.e. police, fire, etc.). Further, we recommend that property owned by the state and federal

1 government, non-profit organizations, federal trust lands and other revenue producing property pay their full  
2 share of the local property tax.

3  
4 **Technical College System** -- We urge eliminating, or substantially reducing, the property tax levied for the  
5 Wisconsin Technical College System and substituting state collected revenues.

## 8 **TRANSPORTATION**

9  
10 **Highways** -- A sound highway system is vital to the well being of agriculture and the entire economy.  
11 We urge that highway user taxes and sales taxes collected on over-the-road vehicles be used only for highway  
12 construction and maintenance purposes. We support an increase in local road funding.

13  
14 We oppose an increase in vehicle registration and driver's license fees.

15  
16 We support adequate funding for rural bridge improvements and urge that more reasonable construction  
17 standards be established for off-system bridges to minimize costs. We support requiring a gravel shoulder at  
18 least 3 feet in width on all new county road construction.

19  
20 We support allowing wider driveways for easier access to farmers' yards from state highways.

21  
22 We urge that greater emphasis be placed on improvement and maintenance of present highways rather than on  
23 new highway construction, using existing right-of-ways wherever possible.

24  
25 We urge the Department of Transportation to treat agricultural land equal to wetlands when obtaining land for  
26 the building of roads. The same degree of effort should be used in preserving agriculture land as is used in  
27 preserving wetlands.

28  
29 **Implements of Husbandry** -- We oppose the registration of implements of husbandry or the licensing of their  
30 operators. We encourage the use of turn signals on farm implements.

31  
32 When overwidth farm equipment is traveling on public roads with an escort vehicle, the operator should be  
33 exempt from liability if an accident occurs due to someone else's negligence.

34  
35 We support updating state laws and DOT regulations to remove conflicting lighting requirements for  
36 agricultural vehicles. We support uniform manufacturing requirements for lighting and visibility markings on  
37 certain agricultural vehicles and implements of husbandry.

38  
39 **Licenses & Registration** - We support legislation which would require proof of statutory non-cancelable  
40 minimum automobile insurance coverage prior to registering a vehicle. The Department of Motor Vehicles  
41 must reduce scheduling problems for driver testing.

42  
43 **Railroads** -- We support a viable rail system in Wisconsin for the shipment of agricultural products. We  
44 encourage the trucking and railroad industry to work together to improve the efficiency of product movement.

45  
46 We oppose granting a government agency the right of first refusal to buy abandoned right-of-way or any other  
47 land. Their abandoned right-of-ways should revert back to the present landowners. When railroads are  
48 abandoned, the party taking them over should have to live up to the same responsibilities as the railroad, such  
49 as weed control and fence maintenance. We oppose closing down town roads and private access roads for the  
50 railroad's benefit.

51  
52 We urge that user fees and not public money primarily fund alternative forms of public transportation, such as  
53 light rail.

54  
55 **Safety** -- We support using higher quality reflective paint in highway markings to improve visibility. We

1 support the installation of a backup warning device system on all commercial milk, cattle, feed and other  
2 trucks making farm pickups or deliveries.  
3  
4 We urge that highway departments regularly maintain highway right-of-ways to reduce weed and brush  
5 problems and improve highway safety.  
6  
7 We support increased education for law enforcement agents, as well as the general public, in regard to slow  
8 moving vehicles and the standard SMV signs that are required by law. We support stronger enforcement of  
9 this law.  
10  
11 We support expanding the section, which addresses agricultural issues, to the driver's education training  
12 manual published by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.  
13  
14 We support a requirement that a highly visible flag be displayed on ATVs that are operated on public roads  
15 when the road is being used for an ATV trail route.  
16  
17 We support a requirement that bicyclists be more visible when traveling on public highways.  
18  
19 We support requiring any bicycle rally or event with 15 or more bicycles be forced to get a permit to help pay  
20 for law enforcement.  
21  
22 **Vehicle Length** -- All state constructed or funded highways should be open to all trucks meeting state length  
23 and weight limitations.  
24  
25 **Vehicle Regulations** -- We oppose allowing non-licensed farm trucks to haul products for sale. We support  
26 excluding farm pickup trucks and trailers from DOT's commercial vehicle regulations.  
27  
28 We support having the DOT educate its enforcement agents of the rules and regulations governing farm trucks  
29 and that the same information is made available to farm truck owners.  
30  
31 ATVs, or snowmobiles and lightweight utility vehicles that are used exclusively for agricultural purposes  
32 should be exempt from registration and license fees.  
33  
34 We encourage better enforcement of current regulations governing mud flaps and covered loads on  
35 commercial vehicles to reduce incidents of gravel or other debris from these vehicles damaging following  
36 vehicles.  
37  
38 We support requiring a sign on the back of school buses indicating that they stop at railroad crossings.  
39  
40 **Vehicle Weight** – We support increasing truck weight limits from 80,000 pounds to 90,000 pounds.