

# 2017 NDFU POLICY AND ACTION

## AS ADOPTED BY DELEGATES AT THE 90TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

DECEMBER 9-10, 2016

BISMARCK EVENT CENTER, BISMARCK, ND

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### ***North Dakota Farmers Union Mission Statement:***

*Guided by our cooperative, legislative and educational goals,  
North Dakota Farmers Union is a grassroots organization committed to the advancement  
of family farm and ranch agriculture and quality of life for people everywhere through  
member advocacy, educational programs, cooperative initiatives and insurance services.*

# PREAMBLE

- 1.
- 2.
3. The basic aims of Farmers Union are based upon our understanding of God and nature. We believe in this
4. nation, which holds the greatest hope for eternal freedom for humanity everywhere.
- 5.
6. Guided by our cooperative, legislative and educational goals, as illustrated by the Farmers Union triangle,
7. we are dedicated to the advancement of the profession of family farm agriculture and to providing a quality
8. of life for people everywhere.
- 9.
10. We, the members of North Dakota Farmers Union (NDFU), are committed to providing effective grassroots
11. leadership in rural America and to significantly increase net farm income, improve the quality of rural life
12. and increase North Dakota's rural population so that family farmers and rural communities can thrive and
13. prosper.
- 14.
15. We reaffirm our convictions of the truth and rightness of the ideals expressed in the Declaration of
16. Independence, the Constitution of the United States and its Bill of Rights.
- 17.
18. Only the family farm system of agricultural production can provide the opportunities of individual enterprise
19. to all farm families in our society. No other system can achieve the economic and social stability, the soil and
20. environmental stewardship and the production efficiency of the family farm.
- 21.
22. Ownership, operation and management of a farm unit should be vested within the family who farms and
23. makes a livelihood from that farm unit. Policies which encourage the separation of ownership, operation or
24. management of farm units are contrary to the interests of family farmers.
- 25.
26. State and federal programs must be targeted to benefit and protect the family farm. These policies can be
27. initiated through persistent and consistent efforts by family farmers working in solidarity with other sectors
28. of our society.
- 29.
30. The combined objectives set forth in this Policy Statement are adopted for the purpose of firmly re-establishing
31. the family farm structure as the primary system for agricultural production, rural and urban stability, national
32. prosperity, the preservation of human and natural resources and the dignity of the individual and the family.
- 33.
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- 45.

# SECTION I. AGRICULTURAL PROGRAM FOR THE FAMILY FARM

The owner-operated family farm and ranch is the keystone of a free, progressive, democratic society and a strong rural America; and is the basis of a secure and stable national food security system.

Family farmers are the critical element in a dynamic system of communities and families that make up rural America. A family farm is an agricultural unit of land and other capital investments operated by a farm operator and his or her family who provide the management, take the economic risk, are good stewards of the land, do most of the work required to operate the unit and depend on farming or ranching for a significant portion of their living expenses.

## **1. NATIONAL FOOD AND FIBER POLICY**

Farm policy must be based on the following:

- A. Our nation's agricultural policy must be directed away from the present course of industrialization and consolidation and toward an economic system that provides citizens the opportunity to own, control and work their own land, define their own destinies and remain contributing members of their communities and country. It is essential that the social and economic impact of any new farm program on rural communities be determined before proceeding.
- B. National farm policy must ensure that control of agriculture is vested with the family farm and reverse the decline in the number of family farms. It should foster a fair and competitive environment that allows farmers and ranchers to increase their net farm income, improve the quality of rural life, and continue to provide a safe, reliable supply of food, fiber and fuel to this country and the world.
- C. We adamantly oppose stripping the nutrition title from the farm bill. It is about connecting the people who grow food to those who eat food – an obvious educational tie that needs to stay in place for any agriculturally driven state such as North Dakota. Further, we are called to support our neighbors who are hungry, many of whom are in rural communities as well as urban. Keeping the nutrition title in the farm bill helps connect the dots in the farm-to-table story so consumers, taxpayers and the hungry understand the importance of a strong agricultural economy.

## **2. FARM POLICY OBJECTIVES**

Farm policy should ensure that family farmers and ranchers can secure net farm income equivalent to families in other sectors of our national economy. It should provide price protection, provide risk management, be targeted toward family farmers, contain stock control mechanisms that do not push stocks onto the market at the point when prices are the lowest, and ensure competition in the marketplace.

### **A. Specific Federal Farm Policy Components**

(1) We support planting flexibility.

(2) We support being given the right to update acreage bases and proven yields on all crops for each farm to reflect more recent years of production.

1. (3) We support building in accountability to reduce government costs and reduce bureaucracy.
- 2.
3. (4) The farm bill should include a weather-related disaster provision in the program. There should
4. not be cross-compliance of insurance coverage for raising commodity crops and production
5. livestock in order to receive disaster payments. Ranching and grain farming are separate
6. enterprises and should be treated as such.
- 7.
8. (5) Farmers and ranchers raising new crops on which they have no production history should
9. have special consideration if disaster assistance is based on crop insurance losses because
10. they have to use T-Yields until they establish proven yields.
- 11.
12. (6) We support a safety net that is countercyclical and indexed to current production costs.
- 13.
14. (7) We support directed program benefits, or targeting support to the production levels of family
15. farmers.
- 16.
17. Targeting would reduce government costs, further the sustainability of family farms and rural
18. communities and counter further consolidation.
- 19.
20. (8) We believe realistic and meaningful payment limits need to be implemented. This means:
- 21.
22. (a) The definition of a person who is actively engaged in production agriculture needs to be
23. strengthened to require active personal management and active personal labor in the
24. actual farming operation.
- 25.
26. (b) That payments should be transparent and directly attributable to a person who meets
27. the criteria of actively engaged.
- 28.
29. (c) We urge the Secretary of Agriculture to use his authority to prevent farm program benefits
30. from going to persons not actively engaged in producing agricultural products.
- 31.
32. (9) We oppose artificial subdivisions of farms in order to avoid payment limitations.
- 33.
34. (10) We oppose farm program payments that are decoupled from production.
- 35.
36. (a) We are in favor of farm program payments that mirror or match any current production.
- 37.
38. (11) We believe all producers should have an opportunity to update the number of base acres
39. on their cropland to reflect a true representation of the number of acres farmed and current
40. crops being raised versus the current base acres which reflect decisions made decades
41. ago. All cropland acres should have the same amount of base acreage, whether they are
42. currently in crop production, enrolled in CRP or used to grow specialty crops including fruits
43. and vegetables, etc.
- 44.
- 45.

1. (12) We support the removal of marketing loan caps and the upward equalization of commodity  
2. marketing loan rates, based on the historic price relationship between commodities and equal  
3. to USDA's cost of production. We support a flexible marketing loan period.  
4.
5. (13) We support establishing a revolving, two-year, farmer-owned reserve of commodities to  
6. provide an adequate supply of raw materials for use as emergency food or renewable energy.  
7.
8. (14) We support a good stewardship program that rewards farmers for following conservation  
9. practices.  
10.
11. (15) We urge USDA to work with NFU, other farm organizations and commodity groups to establish  
12. a carbon footprint for agriculture. It is imperative that this footprint be established by the ag  
13. industry and not be developed by those not associated with agriculture.  
14.
15. (a) Carbon sequestration is an innovative way to enhance income for producers and protect  
16. our environment. Therefore, the trading of carbon credits and the potential for inclusion  
17. of carbon sequestration as an agricultural conservation practice for green payments  
18. should be continued and supported.  
19.
20. (b) We urge carbon sequestration not be biased toward a single practice, such as no-till, but  
21. instead encompass all agricultural practices, including grazing lands, energy feedstock  
22. production, organic cropping, wood lots, the Conservation Reserve Program, and other  
23. proven conservation methods.  
24.
25. (c) We support a national mandatory carbon emission cap and trade system to reduce non-  
26. farm greenhouse gas emissions, if agricultural offsets are recognized and USDA is in  
27. charge of the agricultural carbon credit program. Additionally, we urge the development  
28. of an exchange system to allow for the financial compensation of farmers and ranchers  
29. for their environmentally sound practices.  
30.
31. (16) We support giving the Secretary of Agriculture discretionary authority to institute a short-term  
32. inventory management program.  
33.
34. (17) Because of the current "free" trade environment, we support an international grains agreement  
35. to manage supply among exporters of commodities. This is necessary to address world  
36. supply and to avoid making the United States a magnet for imports. In addition, we support  
37. the establishment of an international food security reserve.  
38.
39. (18) We support provisions in a farm bill for restoring competition in the marketplace and reviewing  
40. the impact of agribusiness mergers and consolidations on farmers and rural communities.  
41.
42. (19) We support granting the Secretary of Agriculture the authority to establish an optional paid  
43. land diversion program that pays farmers for diverting a percentage of a farm's tillable acreage  
44. from production.  
45.

1. (20) Today's global agricultural economy demands that federal farm policy address issues of trade
2. by ensuring that American producers have the tools necessary to compete in a global market.
- 3.
4. (21) Farm policy should not be developed for multinational corporations, processors, exporters,
5. integrated livestock producers or other similar firms that profit from low commodity prices.
- 6.
7. (22) Attempts to reduce funding through budget reconciliation, diversion of funds to other programs
8. or other program cuts should be prohibited through the life of the farm bill title.
- 9.
10. (23) Farmers and ranchers are tasked with feeding a growing population while also being good
11. stewards of the land. Meanwhile, they continue to be hit with government regulations which
12. increase the cost of doing business with no way to pass on those cost increases. We believe
13. family farmers and ranchers should be compensated for any upgrades, maintenance, and
14. work they do which is specifically required in order to comply with government standards.
- 15.

16. B. National Marketing Agency

17. The authority of the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) should be expanded to serve as a

18. marketing agency to contract for the export or import of designated commodities and have a board

19. composed of operating farmers elected by farmer producers of those commodities regulated.

20.

21. (1) It should develop barter agreements, especially with less developed nations.
- 22.
23. (2) It should enter into long-term agreements and contracts with other nations for the sale of U.S.
24. agricultural exports.
- 25.

26. C. National Food Security Reserve

27. National food security reserves must be established for storable commodities to ensure a 45 to

28. 60-day supply to meet domestic and export requirements.

29.

30. (1) These reserves are to be carried on the farm or in the country elevator.
- 31.
32. (2) The program should include provisions for continual rotation on a first-in, first-out basis. The
33. release price should be set at a level to ensure that the reserve does not depress the market
34. price.
- 35.
36. (3) The cost of storage is to be determined by the normal charge of storage set by trade practices.
37. Storage payments to producers should reflect the actual storage costs in publicly licensed
38. warehouses.
- 39.
40. (4) When CCC does not complete grain settlements with elevators and warehouses within 90
41. days, interest should be paid from the first day.
- 42.
- 43.
- 44.
- 45.

1. D. Sugar

2. Effective price support programs to provide security for domestic producers of sugar must be  
3. continued. We oppose a federal price cap on sugar.

4.  
5. The farm law should contain provisions for a realistic import quota of foreign sugar and protection  
6. from the dumping of subsidized foreign sugar on the domestic market.

7.  
8. USDA should administer the sugar program at no cost to taxpayers. This should prevent any sugar  
9. forfeiture to the government and avoid farm program costs.

10.  
11. **3. VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURE**

12. A. We believe family farmers and ranchers will continue to be impacted by low commodity markets,  
13. which leaves them at financial risk. Global competition and international trade rules that favor finished  
14. products over raw commodities will also keep profit potential low on the farm. Given these realities,  
15. value-added agriculture remains an important tool for producers to gain a more substantial share  
16. of the food dollar profits. NDFU will continue to be a leader in value-added agriculture projects and  
17. promote opportunities that have the potential to diversify farm and ranch income.

18.  
19. B. We support the continuing development of nitrogen fertilizer plants in North Dakota.

20.  
21. **C. WE URGE THE NORTH DAKOTA LEGISLATURE TO CONSIDER THE FEASIBILITY OF A**  
22. **STATE OWNED FERTILIZER PLANT.**

23.  
24. **4. SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE**

25. We believe that only the family farm system of agricultural production can truly be sustainable. Sustainable  
26. agriculture integrates three main goals – environmental health, economic profitability and viability, and  
27. social and economic equity. We believe farmers engaged in sustainable agriculture set out to protect  
28. the land, improve their quality of life and enhance the communities in which they live.

29.  
30. A. We define “sustainable” as relating to or being a method of harvesting or using a resource so that  
31. the resource is not depleted or permanently damaged.

32.  
33. **5. FOOD SAFETY**

34. We advocate for a food safety system that focuses on prevention of, not reaction to, foodborne illness  
35. outbreaks. We urge Congress and federal and state agencies to consider the following to ensure that  
36. such a system will grow consumer confidence in the food supply, while not sacrificing family farm  
37. agriculture, by including the following:

38.  
39. A. Recognize unique circumstances of small- and medium-sized family farms and allow them flexibility  
40. in how best to meet food safety standards.

41.  
42. B. Balance food safety goals with the goals of encouraging food hubs, local foods, and community  
43. supported agriculture projects.

44.  
45. C. Provide standards for manure use and water and soil testing that are consistent with typical



1. agriculture production methods. At a maximum, the requirements should be no more strict than
2. those imposed by the National Organic Program.
- 3.
4. D. Create standards that give primacy for implementation and flexibility to the states.
- 5.

6. **6. ORGANIC POLICY**

7. We recognize the growing importance of organic family farming. Organic farming is a management-  
8. intensive technology, not merely a list of acceptable or prohibited materials, designed to achieve a  
9. balance in the agricultural and livestock system similar to that found in natural systems.

10.  
11. We support:

12. A. The enforcement and monitoring of the national organic standards promulgated by USDA;
- 13.
14. B. Maintaining and protecting the integrity of organic labeling;
- 15.
16. C. Labeling standards encouraging the sale of organic products while not limiting opportunities to  
17. market other natural or sustainably produced food products;
- 18.
19. D. Ensuring accreditation and certification costs do not discriminate against small producers;
- 20.
21. E. Requiring USDA to maintain the role of the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) as the  
22. official source of developing policies and procedures to interpret and implement the federal organic  
23. standards;
- 24.
25. F. Maintaining organic livestock production standards that are uniform and account for feeding and  
26. animal health care practices for continuous or transitional organic management;
- 27.
28. G. The control of noxious weeds before they go to seed;
- 29.
30. H. The National Organic Program (NOP).

31.  
32. **7. MARKET CONCENTRATION**

33. We are opposed to continued concentration in marketing and processing of all agricultural products.  
34. We believe the federal antitrust laws must be strengthened and vigorously enforced to preserve the  
35. future of the family farm.

- 36.
37. A. Agencies with jurisdiction should be provided adequate funding and staff to vigorously prosecute  
38. the violators of antitrust laws.
- 39.
40. B. We oppose the vertical and horizontal integration of corporations and cooperatives that create  
41. unfair competition with family farm operations and local cooperatives.
- 42.
43. C. The use of contracting in crop and livestock production is increasing. In order to protect farmers  
44. and ranchers from unfair contracts and other anti-competitive practices, we support legislation  
45. creating a contract producer's bill of rights.



1. D. We support the funding and enforcement of Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration  
2. (GIPSA) proposed rules.  
3.

4. **8. CROP INSURANCE**

5. A. In order to adequately cover a farmer's risks, we call for the continuation, improvement and  
6. affordability of all crop insurance and coverage on all North Dakota crops. We support maintaining  
7. the current or higher subsidy levels for crop insurance.  
8.

9. B. We call for crop insurance reforms that protect producers against quality losses, including protein  
10. discounts, yield reductions and make coverages available up to the cost of production. The effects of  
11. quality losses and multi-year claims on production histories must be minimized so that a producer's  
12. coverage is not diminished.  
13.

14. (1) We support development of affordable supplemental insurance programs to protect producers  
15. in the event of natural disasters.  
16.

17. 2) We support a policy which covers a certain dollar amount per acre such as hail coverage.  
18.

19. (3) The grading of durum for claim purposes should be by durum standards, not spring wheat  
20. standards.  
21.

22. (4) Pulse crops have become a major part of the crop rotation for producers to aid them in  
23. controlling weeds, diseases and fertilizer needs. Therefore, we support the Northern Pulse  
24. Growers Association in their effort to improve the rotational restrictions for broadleaf crops  
25. now being used by the Federal Risk Management Agency.  
26.

27. (5) That RMA recognize the increase in use of cover crops and modify their rules so as not to  
28. disqualify a grower from crop insurance if cover crop is seeded before physiological maturity.  
29.

30. **(6) THAT RMA RECOGNIZE THE BENEFITS OF PLANTING SPECIFIC CASH CROPS INTO**  
31. **LIVING COVER CROPS AND NOT REDUCE A FARMER'S ABILITY TO OBTAIN INSURANCE**  
32. **FOR THAT CROP.**  
33.

34. C. We recommend that the rules for crop insurance, once established, should not be changed during  
35. that crop year.  
36.

37. D. We propose permanent disaster protection in the form of increased subsidies of higher levels of  
38. crop insurance.  
39.

40. E. We call for the Risk Management Agency to offer coverage for both non-GMO and organic crops  
41. based on both current non-GMO and organic prices and recognize and accommodate the unique  
42. production and actuarial experience of producers of certified organic commodities. ~~Additionally, a~~  
43. ~~yield loss caused by fire should not impact a producer's yield history and the producer should be~~  
44. ~~allowed to use that farm's yield average for future crop insurance and farm program calculations.~~  
45.

1. ~~F. We recommend that the Federal Crop Insurance Corp. amend and change their policy language~~  
2. ~~to eliminate their definition of “fire coverage.” The definition should include “any non-arson” fire~~  
3. ~~and not “natural occurring,” as is the present definition.~~  
4.
5. G F. In order to protect beginning and family farmers and ranchers, we support limiting the overall  
6. premium subsidy an individual farmer can receive on federal crop insurance.  
7.
8. H G. We recommend that crop insurance premiums be due December 1st or the date of the last  
9. settlement, whichever is later.  
10.
11. † H. We oppose crop insurance eligibility being coupled with conservation requirements. The  
12. implementation of mandatory conservation cross-compliance for subsidized federal crop insurance  
13. amplifies the everyday challenges farmers face in North Dakota’s unique and agriculturally productive  
14. part of the country. Prairie Pothole Region farmers need carve-out provisions that put them on  
15. a level playing field with other American farmers (many of whom enjoy the benefits of historical  
16. draining practices).  
17.
18. ‡ I. Prevented planting provisions in insurance policies can provide valuable coverage when extreme  
19. weather conditions prevent expected plantings. To maintain the integrity of the program and avoid  
20. abuse, producers should make planting decisions based on agronomically sound and well documented  
21. crop management practices. We encourage the Risk Management Agency (RMA) to develop  
22. guidelines that are objective rather than subjective.  
23.
24. † J. We urge RMA to develop risk management tools for livestock producers that are subsidized in a  
25. way similar to crop insurance.  
26.

27. **9. UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

28. A. The Department of Agriculture must be retained and revised to support the American family farmer.  
29. We support the efforts to reorganize USDA to a more efficient and farmer-friendly organization.  
30.
31. B. We urge USDA to better publicize programs that are directly beneficial to agricultural producers.  
32.
33. C. We favor elected farmer committees to administer farm programs and are opposed to any political  
34. appointees to these committees. We strongly recommend that producer rights be protected in  
35. USDA. USDA shall establish an appeals system based on fairness and equality.  
36.
37. D. We urge the United States to adopt a law similar to the present Canadian law, restricting transportation  
38. of potential sources of noxious weeds from crossing international boundaries.  
39.
40. E. We urge USDA to distinguish between imported and American-grown agricultural products in U.S.  
41. production numbers.  
42.
43. F. We propose that federal and state agencies coordinate and share information in order to avoid  
44. duplication of services and reduce cost to producers. (For example, Risk Management Agency,  
45.

1. Crop Insurance Adjustors, Farm Service Agency, Natural Resources Conservation Service, etc.)

2.  
3. G. We urge USDA to improve an online web portal so farmers and ranchers may access their records,  
4. sign forms electronically and find information about programs in one place;

5.  
6. H. We oppose mandatory closing or consolidation of FSA or NRCS offices.

7.  
8. I. We encourage producers to recognize the importance of filling out NASS survey data. This data  
9. is used by USDA to determine price and yield information for multiple USDA programs.

10.  
11. J. ~~We oppose the use of RMA data when determining county yields for ARC-CO. When not enough~~  
12. ~~data is available from NASS surveys, more surveys should be sent out instead of going to another~~  
13. ~~source such as RMA for county yields.~~ **WE SUPPORT THE USE OF RMA DATA BY USDA TO**  
14. **DETERMINE YIELD INFORMATION FOR MULTIPLE USDA PROGRAMS.**

15.  
16. **10. FEDERAL AG POLICY**

17. A. We urge Congress to establish a federal watch dog division that our FSA, NRCS, Fish and Wildlife  
18. must be held accountable for their actions in dealing with farmers and rural issues.

19.  
20. B. We urge the President, Attorney General and Congress to direct the United States Drug Enforce-  
21. ment Administration to differentiate between industrial hemp and marijuana, and adopt a policy to  
22. allow American farmers to once again grow industrial hemp, thereby legalizing the production of  
23. industrial hemp and its use in American manufacturing efforts, without requiring DEA licenses.

24.  
25.  
26. **11. STATE AGRICULTURAL POLICY**

27. The vast majority of North Dakota's wealth comes from agriculture. The North Dakota Department of  
28. Agriculture should have adequate funds available to actively promote the agriculture industry in North  
29. Dakota and should have jurisdiction over all agriculture commissions and agencies in the state.

30.  
31. A. The state of North Dakota should make every effort to develop reciprocal agreements with its  
32. neighboring states to provide for livestock brand inspection and disease control measures.

33.  
34. B. We support movement of public funds collected for brand registration, brand inspections and  
35. estrays to be moved to the appropriate state agency.

36.  
37. C. We support adequate federal, state and county funding and urge strict enforcement of laws that would  
38. assure the control of noxious weeds, such as leafy spurge, and insects, such as grasshoppers, on  
39. state, federal, public and private land, including conventional and organic farmland, wildlife land,  
40. railroad and highway right-of-ways and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreages.

41.  
42. (1) We particularly urge increased emphasis in the development of biological controls within  
43. coordinated weed and pest control programs.

1. D. We urge NDSU, the North Dakota Department of Agriculture, the ND Legislature and SBARE to
2. promote increased livestock production, dairy production, and other alternative livestock production
3. and processing in North Dakota.
- 4.
5. E. ~~We are concerned about the goals of~~ **URGE** North Dakota State University ~~and ask that the~~
6. ~~purpose and policies of the university be reviewed and directed toward~~ **TO CONTINUE POLICIES**
7. **SUPPORTING** family farm agriculture.
- 8.
9. ~~F. We support NDSU's efforts to improve the working agreements between the College of Agriculture,~~
10. ~~Research and Extension.~~
- 11.
12. ~~G~~ **F.** Donations made to university and/or college research departments (or given to the college or
13. university and designated for research) must be disclosed to the Board of Higher Education and
14. shall remain an open record, available for public review.
- 15.
16. ~~H~~ **G.** The North Dakota State Mill and Elevator should preferably purchase grain produced in North Dakota.
- 17.
18. ~~I~~ **H.** We oppose any proposal to sell or deplete the assets of the North Dakota State Mill or the Bank
19. of North Dakota.
- 20.
21. ~~J~~ **I.** We recommend that elk, deer, buffalo and other forms of non-traditional livestock, including
22. aquaculture, when raised as privately-owned domestic livestock and part of legitimate agriculture,
23. be recognized as domestic or domesticated livestock by North Dakota and the United States
24. Department of Agriculture, and encourage other individual states to take similar action.
- 25.
26. ~~K~~ **J.** We support maintaining the Pride of Dakota program, which is best managed by the State Ag
27. Department.
- 28.
29. ~~L~~ **K.** We will continue to support the Agricultural Products Utilization Commission (APUC). We
30. recommend continued monitoring of APUC to ensure that the focus remains on providing benefits to
31. North Dakota farmers/producers. We urge the North Dakota Legislature to remove APUC from the
32. budget of the Department of Commerce and return APUC to independent budget line-item status.
- 33.
34. ~~M~~ **L.** We urge that facilities and institutions within the state be strongly encouraged to purchase fuels made
35. and fuels grown and processed within the state. The State should use an incentive program to promote
36. this type of economic development. NDFU should set an example in its food service and meals.
- 37.
38. ~~N~~ **M.** We support honey production and beekeepers alike. We urge that beekeepers are compliant with
39. the state and communicative with landowners and chemical applicators, and keep their hives
40. registered and current.
- 41.

## 42. **12. COMMODITY PROMOTION AND CHECKOFFS**

43. A. Commodity promotion programs can be valuable tools for consumer education and market
44. development. We recommend that research and promotion programs financed through producer
45. checkoffs be closely evaluated to see whether such programs are strictly farmer-controlled.

1. We believe that such programs should include the following criteria:

- 2.
3. (1) Approval by a majority of producers voting individually in a referendum by mail, with at least
4. 30% of eligible voters participating. The referendum should be held prior to the imposition of
5. the checkoff.
- 6.
7. (2) Programs being formulated or currently in operation be subject to review at any time on the
8. call of 10% of producers concerned. There should be a reauthorization vote every five years.
- 9.
10. (3) A procedure be provided to enable producers to obtain refund of checkoff funds without
11. delay or hindrance on an annual basis. Refund application blanks should be provided by the
12. purchasers of the commodity.
- 13.
14. (4) Criminal penalties be provided for using funds for personal, political or lobbying activities.
15. No funds should be donated or contracts provided to organizations for the use of political or
16. lobbying activities.
- 17.
18. (5) Changes in existing checkoff programs, including changes in checkoff levies and/or administrative
19. and operational changes, be submitted to the producers affected and subject to approval by
20. a majority vote.
- 21.

22. B. We oppose an increase of the state beef checkoff. If one should be implemented, it must be a

23. voluntary, opt-in choice for individual producers.

24.

25. C. We oppose a mandatory national beef checkoff program and support a voluntary opt-in program.

26.

27. D. We oppose implementing an additional national beef checkoff until such time that the existing

28. checkoff is reformed or abolished.

29.

30. E. We support a cattle producer's right to forward the entire dollar of their national beef checkoff to

31. the Cattlemen's Beef Board (CBB).

32.

33. F. Checkoff programs which derive their collection authority from North Dakota law must appear before

34. the appropriate legislative committees to account for the funds expended on behalf of producers

35. before receiving further spending authority. If any organization enters into a contract with such a

36. commodity checkoff program or receives funds derived from commodity checkoffs, that organization

37. must be subject to open record laws and must be accountable to and appear before appropriate

38. legislative committees regarding the disbursement of said funds. Furthermore, donations from

39. said checkoff collected funds to special projects of organizations that lobby or engage in political

40. activities may be considered only if those projects do not conflict with the policies or positions

41. set forth by the elected members of the commodity checkoff program. North Dakota statutorily

42. authorized checkoff monies may not be used to pay other organizations' dues for membership in

43. national associations or their programs, websites, etc. Checkoff funds from farmer commodities shall

44. not be used for lobbying group agendas, where they are unaccountable to North Dakota farmers.

45.

1. G. The budgets and use of funds of commodity checkoffs must maintain at least 60 percent for research
2. and development.
- 3.
4. H. We oppose the merger of U.S. Wheat Associates and the National Association of Wheat Growers
5. into one organization.
- 6.
7. I. We believe that NDFU should be recognized by the ND Legislature, and the governor of North Dakota
8. be allowed to nominate a minimum of two voting seats on the North Dakota Beef Commission.
- 9.
10. J. We oppose any beef checkoff dollars being appropriated to the United States Farmers and Ranchers
11. Alliance (USFRA) and strongly urge the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to prohibit such expenditures.
- 12.
13. K. We urge the National Farmers Union to act as a contracting agent for the National Beef Checkoff
14. whenever possible.
- 15.
16. L. We oppose private organizations managing state and national-collected funds.
- 17.

18. **13. COMMODITY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT**

19. A. We recommend that USDA fund on-the-farm research and demonstrations that are being implemented
20. by farmers.
- 21.
22. B. We urge the North Dakota Legislature and the governor to support the funding of agricultural
23. research. Recognizing the adverse economic impact on North Dakota, we support stepping up
24. research and increasing funding for combating crop diseases. We support continuation of the
25. NDSU Extension Service in a form that best serves the needs of North Dakota.
- 26.
27. Funding for agricultural research should be primarily from state and federal public funding sources.
28. We urge that any research generated at public research institutions remain in the public domain.
- 29.
30. C. We support the Northern Crops Institute and urge that its budget and appropriations continue to be
31. kept separate from North Dakota State University's budget and that it maintain a producer board.
- 32.
33. D. We urge that the royalties received by NDSU for the sale of protected varieties of seed be used
34. strictly for research and development of new or improved seed varieties and that a financial report
35. be published once a year.
- 36.
37. E. We urge research and orderly development of alternate crops and alternative uses of agricultural
38. commodities. We support the implementation of identity-preserved marketing systems to help the
39. farm producer retain more of the income from marketing alternative crops into niche markets.
- 40.
41. ~~F. We oppose patenting of any life forms.~~
- 42.
43. G. We support increased funding for research for combating all crop diseases and pests.
- 44.
45. H. Publicly funded and other agricultural research at our land grant colleges should not promote the



1. industrialization of agriculture. For example, biotechnology can be a tool for either the advancement  
2. of family farm agricultural systems or industrialized agricultural systems. Such technologies must  
3. be carefully monitored to ensure that they are not destructive to family farm agriculture, farm  
4. stewardship, open agricultural commodity markets and our rural communities.

5.  
6. I. We support the United Nations' treaty for plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

7.  
8. J. We support the Pulse Health Initiative for pulse crops.

9.  
10. **14. COMMODITY MARKETING**

11. A. We request the Department of Agriculture's reporting service to furnish accurate and timely reports  
12. on world and domestic crop conditions, supplies and needs of exporting and importing countries  
13. to producers, as well as the grain trade.

14.  
15. B. We urge federal legislation to direct bankruptcy courts to recognize warehouse receipts and sales  
16. tickets as proof of ownership of stored grain to ensure that farmers holding these would not see  
17. their interest come in second to those of other creditors in cases of elevator bankruptcy.

18.  
19. C. We urge the establishment of a federal storable commodities insurance corporation to guarantee  
20. that each farmer will be protected for each commodity stored, delivered or contracted to licensed  
21. commodity dealers.

22.  
23. D. We call for continued Congressional monitoring of all commodity exchanges and futures contracts,  
24. including derivatives.

25.  
26. E. We support the Livestock Marketing Fairness Act requiring a fixed base price in formula contracts  
27. and requiring that contracts be traded in open, public markets.

28.  
29. F. We believe that commodity markets, in order to more accurately represent the true relationship  
30. between supply and demand, should have reforms. These reforms include:

31.  
32. (1) Guarding against insider trading by individuals or firms that possess foreknowledge of signif-  
33. icant price changes due to large market transactions.

34.  
35. (2) Examining and investigating the role of increasing market power funds, the connections  
36. between the funds and large commercial interests, and the ability of these organizations to  
37. exchange resources and information for the purpose of driving down commodity prices, and  
38. thus lower the prices farmers are paid for their products.

39.  
40. (3) Monitoring and guarding against proposals by the commodity futures exchanges impacting  
41. trading rules and trading limits that would increase market volatility to the detriment of agricul-  
42. tural producers.

43.  
44.  
45. G. Farm commodities should be priced according to commonly understood measures of weight.





1. U. We oppose any effort by USDA to withhold licensing of state elevators also licensed by individual  
2. states.

3.  
4. **15. LABELING OF COMMODITY PRODUCTS**

5. A. Although we prefer mandatory country-of-origin labeling for agriculture products, we would support  
6. voluntary country-of-origin labeling. In order to qualify as U.S. produced, meat products (including  
7. fish) must come from an animal born, raised and harvested in the U.S., and fresh produce and  
8. peanuts, pecans and macadamia nuts must be exclusively grown and processed in the U.S.  
9. Additionally, we believe dairy products should also be included in COOL. Country-of-origin labeling  
10. is a valuable marketing tool for producers and it allows consumers to know where their food is  
11. produced.

12.  
13. We urge Congress to uphold mandatory COOL and NDFU supports USDA's 2013 rule change that  
14. requires labeling of production steps – “born, raised and harvested – for muscle cuts of meats to  
15. ensure consumers are getting accurate information.

16.  
17. **B. NORTH DAKOTA FARMERS UNION ENCOURAGES REIMPLEMENTING MANDATORY COOL**  
18. **THROUGH THE NAFTA NEGOTIATIONS.**

19.  
20. B C. We recommend that the trademark (Real Seal) continue to be used on all food products containing  
21. dairy products. We also request that the word “milk” be used only on products coming from an  
22. animal. Those products coming from plants would be labeled as a beverage.

23.  
24. C D. U.S. producers must comply with rigorous standards regulating food production in our country,  
25. including application and use of pesticides and herbicides, minimum wage requirements, working  
26. conditions, housing, conservation and inspections of food production. We recommend all food  
27. products should be labeled to list the ingredient's nutritional value and country of origin. Canned,  
28. fresh and frozen products should be dated when packaged. We endorse uniformity in product  
29. claims, such as “light,” “low fat,” etc.

30.  
31. D E. We support the “Pride of Dakota” promotion program.

32.  
33. E F. We recommend that food products be labeled with the correct ownership of the parent company  
34. and country of origin. The seal should be plainly visible to the consumer.

35.  
36. F G. We encourage the freedom of agricultural producers and processors to accurately advertise,  
37. label and promote products as hormone-free, antibiotic-free, non-genetically altered or exceeding  
38. national organic standards.

1. **SECTION II. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION AND THE FAMILY FARM**

2.  
3. The goal of the United States in international trade and political relationships must be to stabilize world  
4. agricultural production and ensure that all of the world’s populations have adequate food to meet daily human  
5. nutritional needs.

6.  
7. As a leading exporter of food into the world market, the United States must recognize that any unilateral action  
8. it takes will have profound effects on international food trade and will significantly impact food producing and  
9. importing nations, especially developing nations.

10.  
11. The United States must use its leadership role as a food producer to develop responsible international trade  
12. policies and to increase world food security through cooperative agreements among nations.

13.

14. **1. INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

15. A. We believe that expansion of trade can only be achieved by first stabilizing current trading conditions.  
16. The unregulated free trade system of the United States is a dangerous destabilizing force in world  
17. food production which will lead to boom and bust market cycles for producers and price swings for  
18. consumers.

19.  
20. B. Exporting at less than the cost of production is a purposeful short-changing of producers to the  
21. benefit of the grain trade. Cost of production includes, but is not limited to uniform working conditions,  
22. labor laws and equal treatment of the environment regardless of political borders.

23.  
24. C. We have concerns about the definitions of trade-distorting subsidies as addressed by the U.S.  
25. Trade Representative. These definitions could eventually include all state and federal programs  
26. that provide regulatory, economic and social services to rural areas.

27.  
28. D. We call for attention on the following trade issues.

29.  
30. Support for:

31. (1) Trade as long as it is fair trade. We support a fair trade system that strengthens the health,  
32. environment, food sovereignty, working conditions and labor rights of all countries. Vibrant  
33. national economies are essential to a healthy global community.

34.  
35. (2) The use of an end-use certificate for any grains or livestock coming into the United States.

36.  
37. ~~(3) The creation of a North American Marketing Board which producers could use to enhance  
38. their marketing power. This effort to work with Canada and other countries on a voluntary  
39. basis would allow for joint marketing of our agricultural commodities.~~

40.  
41. (4) The U.S. EPA sharing testing procedures with our trading partners so that our producers are  
42. not put at a financial disadvantage.

43.  
44. (5) Harmonization of farm chemicals in price and usage between the United States and other  
45. countries. We support the concept of the chemical harmonization program.

1. (6) Ending the embargo and normalizing trade relations with Cuba.
- 2.
3. (7) All existing quarantine requirements be strictly adhered to as set forth by USDA/APHIS
4. regarding imports of livestock, livestock products (i.e. boxed beef), and other commodities.
- 5.
6. (8) Transparent competitive market principles and adequate antitrust/anti-collusion measures.
- 7.
8. Opposition to:
9. (1) The Trade Promotion Authority System for ratification of trade agreements in which the entire
10. trade package must be approved without amendment or rejected in total by Congress within
11. a 60-day time limit.
- 12.
13. (2) Embargoes on farm commodities. In the event of an embargo, we urge Congress to require
14. that 100 percent of parity price supports be automatically triggered.
- 15.
16. (3) The strong-arm tactics of today's ag chemical companies in regard to patent infringement
17. laws.
- 18.
19. (4) The World Trade Organization (WTO) and its current methods of trade negotiation. We oppose
20. proposals that call for a worldwide decoupling and dismantling of domestic farm stabilization
21. programs.
- 22.
23. (5) Defining trade-distorting subsidies to include state and federal programs that provide regulatory,
24. economic, and social services to rural areas.
- 25.
26. (6) Predatory marketing practices that cause a decline of market competition.
- 27.

## 28. **2. AGRICULTURAL TRADE AGREEMENTS**

29. The measure of the success of a trade agreement has to be its benefit to agriculture and family farmers  
30. and ranchers' net income. Our trade negotiators need to recognize that food security is non-negotiable  
31. for many trade partners, and that they will never agree to give us full market access.  
32.

33. We call for a formal, thorough analysis of current agricultural trade agreements to determine their success  
34. at meeting their stated goals before any new bilateral or regional trade agreements are negotiated or  
35. approved.  
36.

37. We support trade laws, agreements and treaties that ensure:  
38.

39. A. The right and ability of the United States and other nations and their political subdivisions to maintain
40. and operate policies and programs that protect their interests of public health, safety, welfare and
41. services.
- 42.
43. B. Transparent and competitive market principles as well as adequate oversight of antitrust/anti-
44. collusion practices, competition practices, elimination of predatory practices and investigation into
45. continuing decline of market competition.

1. C. Imported commodities and products are subject to inspection and testing to assure that they are
2. mined, grown and/or produced under standards that are consistent with all domestic laws and
3. regulations.
- 4.
5. D. Any agreement affecting trade that does not undermine the laws, jurisdiction or sovereignty of
6. a country and its political subdivisions. The importer and/or seller of any commodity, product or
7. service should be liable for any violation of domestic laws and regulations, with jurisdiction and
8. venue for such legal challenges residing in the pertinent domestic court.
- 9.
10. E. All products, services and commodities that are imported shall be purchased in an open, competitive
11. and transparent market system.
- 12.
13. F. All imported products have an identified fair market value that may be used as the basis for an
14. infrastructure tax.
- 15.
16. G. Quotas and/or tariffs on any commodity or product of any country when currency exchange rate
17. differences put domestic producers at a competitive disadvantage.
- 18.
19. H. Any agreement that is negotiated and enacted through a transparent democratic process.
- 20.
21. I. The outlawing of export subsidies that allow dumping of agricultural products into the international
22. marketplace at less than the cost of production.
- 23.
24. J. A high standard of health, sanitation and environmental standards to upgrade and bring the quality
25. of agricultural commodity imports to at least the standards required of United States' producers and
26. processors due to concerns of bioterrorism and food-borne illness. We also support the recognition of
27. the right of nations to develop their own domestic food security and supply-management programs.
- 28.
29. Due to the recent concerns with poor quality standards of products made and exported from China,
30. we call for stricter enforcement of inspections.
- 31.
32. K. The development of international pricing agreements with minimum and maximum price levels fair
33. to both producers and consumers.
- 34.
35. L. The establishment of an international food and energy reserve program to provide food aid to the
36. hungry, to manage any surplus production in case of international disaster, to ensure supply for
37. renewable energy programs and to hold excess surpluses in good production years. Both export
38. and import countries would share in the costs of managing and maintaining reserves.
- 39.
40. M. Reciprocity in trade that addresses massive U.S. trade deficits.

41.  
42. Opposition to:

43. A. The North American Free Trade Agreement

44. We call upon Congress to closely monitor the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA)

45. and its side agreement. Therefore, we support reintroduction of the NAFTA Accountability Act.

1. We urge agricultural producers of all three nations to find avenues of cooperation that will be  
2. mutually beneficial in stabilizing production and prices and in exporting our production into the  
3. world market.

4.

5. B. Canadian Free Trade Agreement

6. We request Congress monitor the flow of agricultural products from Canada under the existing Free  
7. Trade Agreement. We oppose any accelerated tariff reductions on agricultural products moving  
8. from Canada into the United States.

9.

10. We call for a Congressional investigation into the formula and the calculations used within the  
11. existing Free Trade Agreement to determine the level of agricultural subsidies in each country. We  
12. believe the formula and the calculations to be detrimental to U.S. producers.

13.

14. C. Dominican Republic-Central America Free Trade Agreement (DR-CAFTA), and Australian Free  
15. Trade Agreement (AFTA)

16. We call upon Congress to closely monitor DR-CAFTA and AFTA and advocate for accountability  
17. for each agreement.

18.

19. D. We call upon Congress to monitor the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) in order to control currency  
20. manipulation, committed by foreign governments, which results in adverse effects to United States'  
21. producers.

22.

23.

24.

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45.

1. **SECTION III. LIVESTOCK DEVELOPMENT AND THE FAMILY FARM**

2.  
3. **1. DAIRY POLICY**

4. U.S. dairy producers provide a high-quality, stable supply of dairy products to consumers. Dairy producers  
5. in turn need to receive a profitable return on their investment.

6.  
7. We urge Congress to develop a comprehensive dairy program that will create an equitable means of  
8. pricing milk that does not disadvantage dairy producers. This policy should:

- 9.
- 10. A. Call for a single nationwide milk marketing order. Location specific differentials as part of the federal
- 11. restructuring of the milk market order system should only be adopted if the differentials are coupled
- 12. with a base price on all classes of milk.
- 13.
- 14. B. Support legislation to clarify that milk protein concentrates (MPCs) are the concentration of milk
- 15. proteins from fluid milk. Milk proteins from reconstituted products (powdered milk products) cannot
- 16. be considered a concentrated product and therefore classified as a remanufactured milk protein
- 17. powder and be assessed a tariff similar to other imported milk powders.
- 18.
- 19. C. Provide transparency in milk price reporting.
- 20.
- 21. D. Include a base price policy for milk. The base price should help producers in all regions of the
- 22. country and provide for supply management. The base price should be set at a level that allows
- 23. producers to earn a fair return on their milk from the marketplace.
- 24.
- 25. E. The DIAP (Dairy Import Assessment Program) should remain a part of the U.S. Dairy Policy.
- 26.

27. We support North Dakota policy that includes:

- 28. A. The diagnostic team approach and encourage its expansion to all family-operated livestock and
- 29. dairy farms in North Dakota.
- 30.
- 31. B. The development of a dairy specific financing program through the Bank of North Dakota for family-
- 32. owned dairies.
- 33.
- 34. C. Promoting the development of dairy processing in the state of North Dakota.
- 35.

36. **2. LIVESTOCK**

37. Livestock production is essential to the well-being of North Dakota. North Dakota Farmers Union actively  
38. promotes the development of livestock production in North Dakota as a vital component in maintaining  
39. a healthy agriculture sector.

40.  
41. Our organization will remain a leader within the livestock industry, actively promoting its growth through  
42. leadership programs, business ventures and responsible livestock policy.



1. This policy should:
2. A. Favor the humane treatment of animals and encourage open dialogue with animal welfare groups;
3. however, it should urge caution in passing laws regarding animal rights so that sound management
4. practices are not adversely affected.
- 5.
6. B. Favor continuation of livestock grazing on federal lands and maintaining reasonable grazing rates
7. to continue a viable livestock industry.
- 8.
9. C. Support the dissolution of the monopoly that major meat packers have and the control they have
10. on finished livestock inventory.
- 11.
12. D. Support mandatory price reporting by meat packing plants.
- 13.
14. E. Support like-minded livestock organizations.
- 15.
16. F. Oppose the USA beef industry being referred to as a North American herd.
- 17.
18. G. Oppose a ban on the slaughter of horses.
- 19.
20. H. Urge the Department of Justice to investigate the regional livestock monopoly.
- 21.
22. I. Favor the LIP (Livestock Indemnity Program) of the Agricultural Act of 2014 and ELAP (Emergency
23. Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees, and Farm-raised Fish Program). We recommend the
24. authorization of increasing the cap of \$20 million of CCC funds for eligible producers to \$50 million
25. in a fiscal year for the ELAP.
- 26.
27. **J. URGE IN A TIME OF DISASTER/SEVERE DROUGHT THAT USDA RELEASE CRP LAND FOR**
28. **HAYING AND GRAZING AT THE SAME TIME, AND TO DO SO AS SOON AS DISASTER/**
29. **DROUGHT IS RECOGNIZED.**
- 30.

### 31. **LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION RECOMMENDATIONS**

32. We recognize that family farm agriculture and good sound environmental practices need to work together.  
33. Our policy encourages a well-balanced, sensible environmental policy that protects the public and the  
34. environment without unduly burdening family farmers through excessive regulation or economic hardship.  
35.

#### 36. A. Implications of Scale

37. Livestock manure is a valuable resource that provides essential nutrients to crop land. However, when  
38. livestock manure is concentrated into large volumes, improperly stored, transported, or disposed,  
39. it can have a negative effect on the environment. The issue of scale is critical in determining the  
40. levels of risk associated with manure management, and therefore paramount in the development of  
41. policy. Matching the appropriate regulatory control to the appropriate scale may be key in designing  
42. appropriate livestock manure management practices.  
43.

44. The large amount of manure generated by livestock production presents a considerable manure  
45. management challenge. In addition to the detrimental effects large quantities of manure can have

1. on land and water, there are also concerns that manure containing bacteria, viruses, and other  
2. possibly harmful organisms released into the environment in huge volumes could lead to public  
3. health issues.

4.  
5. However, there is general concern that any additional regulations aimed at agriculture would lead  
6. to costly and intrusive measures for all producers that could force small to medium-sized producers  
7. out of business.

8.  
9. We support a tiered system that determines the degree of regulation by the size of the operation.

10.  
11. B. Federal Regulation

12. The Environmental Protection Agency has established national standards for large-scale confinement  
13. operations or CAFOs (Confined Animal Feeding Operations). Because there is a great variance in  
14. environmental conditions from state to state and even within each state, broad national guidelines  
15. may not be appropriate for every location.

16.  
17. We support national minimum guidelines or standards that give primacy for implementation and  
18. flexibility in regional planning to the states. A national policy should discourage polluters from  
19. “shopping” among the states for the lowest environmental standards and encourage states and  
20. localities to establish standards beyond the federal minimums.

21.  
22. C. State Regulation

23.  
24. (1) We support state standards that are on a graduated system of at least three tiers, small,  
25. medium and large. They should be implemented with a sliding scale of standards that address  
26. each size operation.

27.  
28. (2) We urge the North Dakota Department of Health to issue rules for large CAFOs that prohibit  
29. locating over glacial aquifers, require bonding and provide an opportunity for a public vote  
30. through the administrative process.

31.  
32. (3) North Dakota should safeguard the right of political subdivisions to enact and enforce their  
33. own zoning ordinances and we strongly encourage all townships and counties to establish  
34. their own standards, so long as minimum state requirements are met.

35.  
36. (4) We support the North Dakota Department of Health’s Model Zoning for Animal Feeding  
37. Operations (AFOs).

38.  
39. D. Specific Recommendations for Large-Scale Facilities:

40.  
41. (1) Because technology exists that reduces environmental impact, enhances the quality of life  
42. for neighbors and communities, and encourages increased production, we support using a  
43. high standard of technology for manure storage. New and expanding large scale operations  
44. should be required to utilize new technologies.

1. (2) In order to protect the rights of both farm and non-farm citizens, we support setback distances.
2. New facilities should be located at a setback from existing residences (residence on the facility
3. not applicable), businesses, churches, schools or public use areas. Conversely, existing
4. operations should be protected from encroaching development.
- 5.
6. (3) Permit applicants must prepare and submit a manure management plan containing detailed
7. information regarding proposed method of distribution (optimum crop schedule,
8. timing and location of applications, calculations about how much land is necessary for
9. application, methods to reduce/eliminate potential water pollution and odor, and detailed
10. records for 3-5 years following application detailing methods and dates of application).
- 11.
12. (a) Application of manure should be injected or incorporated into the soil wherever possible.
13. Aerial spraying of liquid manure should be prohibited with the exception of gray water.
- 14.
15. (b) Manure should not be applied in such a way as to cause contamination from run-off.
- 16.
17. (4) Permit applicants for a large scale facility must serve notice to the public describing the type of
18. facility to be constructed, the type of manure to be generated, the manure handling treatment to
19. be used, a legal description of the property, and notice of a public comment period. Applicants
20. must develop a "baseline" for monitoring future water/soil quality. In addition, all managers/
21. operators must complete training in manure management and odor control.
- 22.
23. (5) Permit holders must disclose the number of animals within a facility upon request. The Health
24. Department should develop a policy that includes nursing animals in permitted amount of animals.
- 25.
26. (6) Annual, unannounced inspections of operations including independent testing of water quality.
- 27.
28. (7) "Bad Actor" legislation allowing the state to reject permits from producers who have a poor
29. environmental record (habitual environmental damage) or whose permit has been revoked
30. in another state.
- 31.
32. (8) Facility closing requirements that ensure proper clean-up if they cease operating. This would
33. require total removal of manure and contaminated soils within a specified period after closure
34. and revegetation within three years of closure.
- 35.
36. (9) Existing operations should be required to comply with new rules within a certain amount of
37. time with no grandfather clauses.
- 38.
39. (10) In order to protect taxpayers, permits should require financial assurances including proof of
40. liability insurance to a determined amount, net worth, or adequate bonding.
- 41.
42. (11) Increase the statute of limitations for the nuisance law.
- 43.
44. (12) Provide penalties for violation of state and local CAFO regulations.
- 45.

1. **4. LIVESTOCK HEALTH**
2. A. We support the continuation of the North Dakota Voluntary Johnne’s Disease Testing Program.
- 3.
4. B. We support the right of meat processors to voluntarily test animals for diseases such as BSE to
5. meet the enhanced requirements of value-added markets.
- 6.
7. C. We support the Board of Animal Health’s effort to monitor bioterrorism within the livestock industry.
- 8.
9. D. We are opposed to closing or relocating the Plum Island Research Facility.
- 10.
11. E. We support the producer’s right to use antibiotics, other products and animal livestock technologies
12. that have been proven safe, on an “as needed” basis.
- 13.
14. F. We oppose the use of antibiotics in animal feed for the purpose of weight gain. Protecting against
15. antibiotic resistance is a key issue farmers and ranchers need to be aware of and should act as
16. advocates promoting efforts to protect the public and provide a safe, reliable food supply.
- 17.
18. G. We encourage all livestock producers to develop professional relationships with their veterinarians
19. to learn more about the rules of the Veterniary Feed Directive.
- 20.
- 21.
22. H. We support the National Scrapie Eradication Program.

23. **5. CONSUMER PROTECTION**
24. A. We support stronger measures which would prevent market manipulation by entities through
25. inconclusive testing of agricultural products (false BSE tests). Any release of information should
26. be based solely on final, scientific, and positive testing.
- 27.
- 28.
29. B. We need strict enforcement of trade laws and labeling laws to provide protection to consumers
30. and livestock producers from the importation of livestock diseases such as Bovine Spongiform
31. Encephalopathy (BSE), tuberculosis, foot and mouth disease (FMD) and other communicable
32. diseases.
- 33.
34. C. We support the ND Beef Quality Assurance Program.
- 35.
36. D. The food industry continues to develop methods that are intended to eliminate the threat of food
37. borne illness from our food supply. Irradiation is a new technology, and North Dakota Farmers
38. Union recognizes this process as a tool to protect consumers against harmful pathogens; however,
39. our organization urges all applications continue to be evaluated as to its overall impact, including
40. any health and safety issues that may arise due to the new technology.

41. **6. ANIMAL DISEASE TRACEABILITY**
42. NDFU supports an animal disease traceability program if the following points are met:
- 43.
- 44.
- 45.

1. A. Has the least possible cost to producers.
- 2.
3. B. Encourages full participation and shared responsibility throughout the industry.
- 4.
5. C. Provides adequate liability protection fire walls including, but not limited to, an exemption from the
6. Freedom of Information Act.
- 7.
8. D. Is conducive to the collection of data that will be compatible with, and complementary to, the
9. country-of-origin labeling (COOL) law.
- 10.
11. E. The animal disease traceability program releases information only for confirmed cases when an
12. animal health problem arises necessitating an animal be traced to its source.
- 13.
14. F. Establishes an educational component within the program to educate producers on current
15. requirements.
- 16.
17. G. Provides for animal identification records being maintained only by USDA, funded only by US-
18. DA-APHIS and administered and maintained by state boards of animal health and not by private
19. organizations.
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1. **SECTION IV. RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE FAMILY FARM**

2.

3. The key to successful rural development is to stabilize, strengthen and build upon the agricultural base and  
4. the family farm structure of rural America. Economic diversification must be a supplement to, not a substitute  
5. for, a healthy agricultural economy and a strong family farm system.

6.

7. The creation of agricultural opportunities for a new generation of beginning farmers must be a central component  
8. of rural development.

9.

10. The organization of cooperative enterprises which retain equity, control, benefits and ownership for agricultural  
11. producers within rural communities is a proven self-help, home-grown rural development mechanism which  
12. builds needed economic infrastructures for rural people.

13.

14. We recommend a loan program for farmers to invest and build producer-owned, value-added co-ops to gain  
15. economic independence and spur rural economic development.

16.

17. Access to credit, technical expertise and markets are essential ingredients in securing opportunities for rural  
18. and agricultural enterprises.

19.

20. We call for a new partnership in which our federal and state governments and rural people can develop together  
21. the full potential of rural America's human and natural resources.

22.

23. **1. FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA)**

24. A. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) should:

25.

26. (1) Provide ag credit only to family-sized farm operators who cannot obtain financing elsewhere.

27.

28. (2) Provide supervised loan programs to beginning and other family farm operators.

29.

30. (3) Provide long-term real estate loans ~~to be graduated to commercial credit at the end of ten~~  
31. ~~years~~. The interest rate and repayment schedule would be adjusted to build an adequate  
32. equity base ~~during the initial ten-year period~~ and be based on the producer's annual net farm  
33. income and production. ~~The graduation could be postponed in case of economic hardship.~~

34.

35. (4) Provide production (operating) loans with adjusted interest rates and repayment schedules in  
36. accordance with the producer's production and income.

37.

38. (5) Be authorized to develop innovative programs of finance and assistance for land transfer between  
39. generations and for establishment of new farm units, such as Land Link.

40.

41. (6) Work closely with state programs designed for beginning farmers and be able to supplement  
42. and guarantee such state programs.

43.

44. (7) Make land and improvements within FSA inventory available to eligible farm families.

45.

1. (8) Restructure FSA loans with borrowers' rights and protections in mind. Restructuring opportunities
2. provided by law should be preserved for family farmers.
- 3.
4. (9) Consider applications promptly, with responses reported to the applicant as quickly as possible.
5. Present FSA loan limits should reflect land values and provide opportunities for additional
6. family farmers.
- 7.
8. (10) Discontinue the phase-down of direct FSA loans. We call upon Congress to increase the
9. appropriations and allocations toward a direct loan program.
- 10.
11. (11) Raise the direct loan limit for operating and farm ownership at FSA from \$300,000 to at least
12. \$1 million.
- 13.
14. B. In cooperation with other ag lenders, FSA should streamline and standardize their forms to provide
15. more ease and uniformity in their credit evaluation process.
- 16.
17. C. We urge USDA to consider the relevancy of information that is required to be provided during
18. sign-up for farm programs. We support efforts to enforce payment limitations.
- 19.
20. D. We call on Congress to appropriate additional funds to adequately staff and maintain current FSA
21. offices.
- 22.

## 23. **2. FARM CREDIT SYSTEM**

24. We reaffirm our commitment to Farm Credit System (FCS) and its local cooperative associations. FCS

25. is an essential service that must be maintained as a financially sound source of agricultural credit.

26.

27. A. We urge FCS to provide member-borrowers full access to their individual case files.
- 28.
29. B. We urge FCS to give its greatest priority to fully coordinating its credit services to assist its family
30. farm member-borrowers.
- 31.
32. C. We urge the Farm Credit Administration to increase the authority of local boards of directors so
33. that FCS' lending policies adequately reflect member control.
- 34.
35. D. We oppose any restructuring of the farm credit system which dilutes farmer ownership of their
36. cooperative credit organization or replaces farmer-elected members of system boards with
37. commercial bankers. We believe that the ability of the system to access the agency market for
38. funds must be protected to ensure that the FCS continues to serve as an alternative source of
39. credit for producers.
- 40.

## 41. **3. RURAL CREDIT AND NORTH DAKOTA**

42. The state of North Dakota has a responsibility to use its resources and authorities to the fullest

43. extent to assist family farmers.

44.

45.



1. A. We favor continuation of the North Dakota Mediation Service. We urge continued use of the Farm  
2. Credit Review Board as a base for providing a coordinated and consolidated set of services to  
3. farmers. This agency should also be the primary vehicle for state funded or sponsored credit  
4. programs of operating and real estate loans to financially distressed farmers. We urge the legislature  
5. to provide both adequate funding and authority to ensure the effectiveness of this agency. We  
6. urge the Industrial Commission to appoint representation from both North Dakota general farm  
7. organizations.  
8.
9. B. We believe the Bank of North Dakota should focus its resources to its primary mission as stated  
10. in the Bank's philosophy: ~~"To encourage and promote agriculture, commerce and industry in~~  
11. ~~North Dakota."~~ **"TO DELIVER QUALITY, SOUND FINANCIAL SERVICES THAT PROMOTE**  
12. **AGRICULTURE, COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY IN NORTH DAKOTA."** Therefore, the State  
13. Industrial Commission should use its authorities and the Bank's capabilities to maintain and develop  
14. programs that assist family farmers.  
15.
16. (1) We support the use of the one-stop capital center.  
17.
18. (2) The Bank of North Dakota and the Board of University and School Lands should continue to  
19. make maximum funds available for farm real estate loans for family farmers.  
20.
21. (3) We recommend the expansion of the Bank of North Dakota's beginning farmer programs. These  
22. programs should provide a reduced, fixed rate of interest for at least the first ten years of the  
23. loan.  
24.

#### 25. **4. FARM DEBT REORGANIZATION**

26. A. We call for continued policies of forbearance and restructuring of loans. We urge restraints in the  
27. quantity of farm debt write-down.  
28.

#### 29. **5. RURAL REVITALIZATION**

30. A. Grants and low interest monies should be made available for the revitalization of business areas  
31. in our rural communities.  
32.
33. B. In recognition of the interdependence between the family farm and the independent rural community  
34. business, we urge our fellow members to patronize rural town businesses that share our common  
35. goals and issues.  
36.
37. C. We call upon our organization to confer with farm, cooperative, government and business organizations  
38. to develop programs to revitalize the economy of the Great Plains region. We encourage NFU to  
39. initiate a National Rural Summit.  
40.
41. D. We urge cooperatives and other businesses to process farm products close to the production areas  
42. as a means to support and build the economies of our rural communities.  
43.
44. E. Economic Development should:  
45.

1. (1) Be more open and receptive to rural and urban taxpayers concerns and inputs.
- 2.
3. (2) Have clearly defined goals, objectives, processes and policies.
- 4.
5. (3) Require companies receiving economic development incentives and taxpayer subsidies to
6. pay wages at least 125% of the federal poverty level.
- 7.
8. (4) Have clawback provisions if companies don't live up to their promises of job creation, retention
9. and wages.
- 10.
11. (5) Support legislation to mandate accountability of city and county economic development
12. corporations.
- 13.
14. F. We support the effort to maintain the Adult Farm Business Management education program in
15. North Dakota. Continued support through the State Board of Career and Technical Education is
16. necessary to allow local school districts to provide this valuable and necessary program of adult
17. education.
- 18.
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1. **SECTION V. COOPERATIVES AND THE FAMILY FARM**

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The promotion and encouragement of farm cooperatives should be emphasized as an effective means to increase farmers' bargaining power.

We reaffirm our belief in the cooperative principles, including:

- one-member, one-vote
- continuing education
- open membership
- patronage refund
- competitive prices
- limited return on investment
- autonomy and independence
- cooperation among cooperatives
- concern for community
- political and religious neutrality
- continuous expansion

We believe cooperatives should set aside the full amount of educational funds permitted by law.

**1. CAPPER-VOLSTEAD ACT**

- A. The rights of agricultural producers to act together to handle, process and market agricultural products through cooperative activity, as guaranteed under the Capper-Volstead Act of 1922, must be continued. These same rights should be formally extended under law to farm supply and consumer cooperatives.
- B. The rights of cooperative members to organize and operate regional and interregional cooperatives (marketing agencies in common) or to merge with other cooperative associations, should not be restricted by law or government regulation. However, we are not in favor of regionals absorbing local cooperatives until other options of maintaining local control have been exhausted, including merger or joint venture with a nearby cooperative. When necessary for a regional to absorb a local cooperative, we strongly urge every effort would be made by the local members or a nearby cooperative to purchase the cooperative back when it is feasible. We demand that regional cooperative boards work together, and with local cooperatives, to help them continue operating for the benefit of the members while still following all cooperative principles.
- C. The responsibilities of administering the Capper-Volstead Act should remain with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
- D. Because cooperative businesses are member-owned and controlled, we oppose any governmental regulation which would infringe upon the rights of cooperative members to determine the policies or operation of their cooperative.
- E. Value-added cooperatives maintaining cooperative principles of member-ownership and control should be supported by North Dakota Farmers Union.
- F. We are opposed to Unincorporated Cooperatives that undermine the Capper-Volstead Act.

1. **2. MEMBER INVESTMENT RIGHTS**
2. Farmers have the right to invest in their cooperatives in accordance with the Rochdale principles.
3. Federal or state governments have no right to single out the investments made by farmers in their own
4. cooperatives for special restrictions and penalties.
- 5.
6. **3. CONDUCTING COOPERATIVE BUSINESS**
7. A. Patrons should take an interest in the business operation of their cooperatives and should attend
8. annual meetings to receive directors' and management reports.
- 9.
10. B. Members of boards of directors should be elected from among the members; persons carefully
11. selected who have sound business judgment, Farmers Union philosophy, and who will not use their
12. position for personal advantage. Ideally, the elective process assumes more than one candidate
13. for each position. We recommend patrons elect nominating or candidate search committees.
- 14.
15. C. Directors should set policy and direction for the cooperative. Managers should be charged with
16. the responsibility of managing day-to-day operations. To ensure that directors of cooperatives are
17. responsible to their member-patrons, only member-patrons should be involved in the selection and
18. election of directors. Delegates representing co-op members must be regular voting members of
19. that cooperative and should be elected by the members.
- 20.
21. D. Directors' fees should not be subject to Workers Compensation tax and benefits or any other
22. salary-related tax deductions.
- 23.
24. E. Either spouse should be able to represent the family farm in voting at cooperative meetings. We
25. encourage both spouses to become voting members of cooperatives.
- 26.
27. F. We are opposed to a cooperative forming a public corporation in order to sell stock on Wall Street
28. as a means to raise capital. This is a departure from cooperative principles. We oppose the regional
29. cooperatives leasing or purchasing property from local cooperatives and delivering products directly
30. to local co-op patrons.
- 31.
32. G. We urge systematic retirement of patronage stock so the capital requirements of co-ops are provided
33. by the current member-users of the co-op.
- 34.
35. **4. CO-OP AFFILIATIONS WITH FARMERS UNION**
36. A. Patronage Responsibility
- 37.
38. (1) Every member of Farmers Union should buy every possible supply, sell all possible products
39. and buy all possible insurance and other services from Farmers Union member-owned or
40. affiliated business activities and cooperatives.
- 41.
42. B. Affiliated Co-op Responsibilities
- 43.
44. (1) Farmers Union-affiliated cooperatives should buy products and services locally whenever
45. possible to further local and/or state economic development.

1. (2) We ask CHS, Inc., to continue to support their cooperative foundation. They should work to
2. remain loyal to cooperative principles and remember the importance of grassroots members
3. and their input.
- 4.
5. (3) We oppose CHS' involvement in out-of-country corporate farming practices which competes
6. with U.S. farmers.
- 7.
8. (4) We oppose CHS and other federated cooperatives from using their scale and wholesale pricing
9. power to unfairly compete with their member cooperatives. These cooperatives should also
10. not share wholesale sales information with their retail divisions in order to avoid a conflict of
11. interest.
- 12.

### 13. C. Common Ties

- 14.
15. (1) The growth of Farmers Union cooperatives and the Farmers Union organization has occurred
16. through common efforts which have proven to be mutually beneficial. Members should take
17. concerted action to prevent disassociation between Farmers Union and cooperatives and to
18. maintain the common Farmers Union identity. We further recommend that members elect
19. delegates and directors who would maintain the relationships between these farmer institutions.
- 20.
21. (2) We invite our affiliated cooperatives to submit resolutions to the Policy and Action Drafting
22. Committee as a method to increase communications between Farmers Union and the
23. cooperative sector. This would promote a closer working relationship on legislative issues.
- 24.

### 25. D. Educational Funds and Dues Checkoffs

- 26.
27. (1) A basic means of accomplishing closer relationships between Farmers Union and Farmers
28. Union business activities is the payment of five percent of net earnings to educational funds
29. and checking off dues by cooperatives. Educational funds and dues checkoffs are the lifeblood
30. of our youth program and of the cooperative philosophy.
- 31.
32. (2) We encourage the prompt payment of dues through checkoffs so that membership may never
33. be delinquent. We urge our regional cooperatives give every assistance in extending these
34. practices to every cooperative in the state and help facilitate the use of checkoffs through
35. data processing where it is already part of the bylaws.
- 36.
37. (3) We urge CHS to continue financial support for local and regional cooperative education even
38. if local cooperatives merge and become a part of CHS.
- 39.
40. (4) County Farmers Union organizations should encourage cooperatives and their patrons not now
41. affiliated with Farmers Union to check off dues and pay educational funds to the Farmers Union
42. as an effective means of building a farm organization for their own protection and existence.
- 43.
44. (5) We urge that county organizations use their resources to sponsor local seminars on issues
45. affecting their co-ops.

1. (6) We encourage county boards to have annual planning sessions with directors, managers and  
2. employees of area cooperatives concerning common problems and the use of educational  
3. funds.

4.  
5. (7) We urge the Board of Directors of NDFU to pay for one board member of the non-affiliated  
6. cooperatives to the state convention as a guest.

7.  
8. E. Dakota Pride Cooperative

9.  
10. (1) We support continuation and expansion of Dakota Pride Cooperative.

11.  
12. **5. COOPERATIVE FINANCING**

13. A. We support the current 50% membership criteria for CoBank borrowers.

14.  
15. B. We request legislative authority for the Bank of North Dakota to issue bonds for the purpose of  
16. loans at reduced interest rates to cooperative elevators constructing subterminal facilities.

17.  
18. C. We oppose any effort of CoBank to lend money to non-cooperative agribusiness.

19.  
20. D. We urge that federal funding programs be initiated along the lines of the original REA program,  
21. now called the Rural Utility Service (RUS), to assist farmers in forming value-added cooperatives.

22.  
23. **6. CREDIT UNIONS**

24. A. We encourage the organization and growth of credit unions.

25.  
26. B. We oppose any effort to impose income tax on member-owned nonprofit credit unions.

27.  
28. C. We support maintaining the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund as a separate and  
29. independent agency from other federal deposit insurance systems.

30.  
31. D. We support the right of all Americans to choose how and where they deposit their earnings and  
32. transact their personal financial business.

33.  
34. **7. COOPERATIVE MERGERS AND CONSOLIDATION**

35. A. Retaining local cooperatives is the last hope of survival for many communities. We urge that local  
36. cooperatives consider sharing services. North Dakota Farmers Union, including local and county  
37. units, should assist in information and research.

38.  
39. B. All joint ventures between a cooperative and a multinational corporation should still return to the  
40. original cooperative principles and significantly benefit members of the cooperative. We oppose  
41. all mergers between a cooperative and a multinational corporation.

42.  
43. C. The State and National Farmers Union organizations should use whatever influence they have to  
44. seek enforcement of the laws currently in place that limit monopolies and restrict mergers.

45.

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**8. QUENTIN BURDICK CENTER FOR COOPERATIVES**

A. North Dakota Farmers Union is a long-time supporter of the Quentin Burdick Center for Cooperatives, which provides educational opportunities in the cooperative business model. We urge continued financial and human resource involvement in this important organization by NDFU.



1. **SECTION VI. LAND RESOURCES FOR THE FAMILY FARM**

2.  
3. Recognizing that land is essential to family farmers and is a finite resource, we believe the following policies  
4. must be instituted to equitably share the opportunities of land.

5.  
6. **1. LAND OWNERSHIP**

7. A. Farmland must be controlled by family farmers. Laws should prohibit concentration of farmland  
8. ownership by corporations, associations, and off-farm interests. We call for strict enforcement of  
9. our state’s corporation farming laws. These laws must be closely monitored and strengthened so  
10. they may continue to preserve production agriculture for family farmers.

11.  
12. B. We believe the anti-corporation farming law as initiated in 1931, which was expanded in 1981 to  
13. allow incorporation of farms by close relatives, should not be further weakened to give additional  
14. advantages to non-family farm units or to allow the control of agricultural production to move to off-farm  
15. interests.

16.  
17. (1) Lands acquired by corporations through mortgages must be divested within a maximum of three  
18. years, with an extension of another two years, if leased back to the previous owner.

19.  
20. (2) Nonprofit corporations should be allowed to receive land through gifts, estates, etc., but  
21. be required to divest themselves of such land within five years. We urge that legislation for  
22. ensuring that land mandated for divestiture be sold to family farmers.

23.  
24. (3) We oppose the purchase of North Dakota farmland by environmental groups, investment  
25. groups and other outside investors. In the event of such purchase, the taxable valuation for  
26. property tax purposes shall be no less than the purchase price.

27.  
28. C. We support provisions of the state’s corporation farming law which prevents corporations and non-  
29. farming cooperatives from vertically integrating into the production of agricultural commodities.

30.  
31. (1) We support state and federal legislation to define and protect farmers’ rights in contracting  
32. for agricultural production with commodity buyers, processors and other corporations.

33.  
34. (2) Any partnership, limited partnership, limited liability partnership, limited liability limited  
35. partnership, corporations or cooperatives engaging in the business of agriculture production  
36. must be required to disclose all partners, limited partners or stockholders to the Secretary of  
37. State of North Dakota.

38.  
39. D. We support the existing law restricting non-resident aliens from owning land in North Dakota and  
40. call for similar legislation on the federal level. We call for legislation that will require better reporting  
41. of such purchases and stronger enforcement by the Attorney General.

42.  
43. E. Governmental entities which have acquired private lands must be required to pay in-lieu-of property  
44. taxes amounting to 100% of the taxes which would normally be assessed on such property.

1. **2. LANDOWNER RIGHTS IN NATURAL RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

2. We support a comprehensive policy that protects landowners from speculation and unfair contracts in  
3. the development of natural resources.

4.  
5. A. Prohibition of Non-Disclosure or Secrecy Clauses in Leases

6. Non-disclosure clauses serve only to protect the interests of the contractor/developer. Landowners  
7. should be allowed to review leases with attorneys, lenders and other holders of leases to ascertain  
8. the relative value of a lease offer.

9.  
10. B. Establish a Registry of Current Standard Leases and Make Accessible to the Public

11. A registry allows landowners to compare offered leases with standard leases and better ascertain the  
12. relative value of a lease offer. Allows landowners to compare other lease terms with standard leases.

13.  
14. C. Prohibit Mandatory Arbitration Clauses

15. Mandatory arbitration requirements are becoming more common in contracts. Prohibiting such  
16. clauses in contracts will ensure the right of civil litigation for landowners in lease disputes and  
17. helps balance the legal interests of landowners and developers.

18.  
19. D. Limiting Length of Lease Options

20. Limiting the term of lease options will prevent companies from tying up large tracts of land for  
21. extended periods, thus encouraging use of lease options for actual development instead of  
22. speculation.

23.  
24. E. Authorize Collective Bargaining of Leases

25. Allows landowners to bargain collectively for standard lease terms throughout a region or development  
26. project. Such a provision would encourage fairness in the application of lease terms among multiple  
27. landowners.

28.  
29. F. Bonding and Reclamation Protections

30.  
31. (1) Encourages responsible energy development and transmission at outset of lease by providing  
32. funds up front for reclamation of land after the project has expired.

33.  
34. (2) We support the requirement that private surface owners be granted the same surface use  
35. and reclamation requirement as the State Land Department mandates for state land.

36.  
37. (3) Any reclamation standard should include materials incidental to energy development (e.g.  
38. pipelines, saltwater disposal systems).

39.  
40. G. Prohibit Prior Investment as Condition of Lease or Option of Fulfillment

41. Discourages use of option development to coerce investment by landowners.

42.  
43. H. Farmland Protection

44. Prohibits farmland ownership by energy development or generation companies. Compliance  
45. with North Dakota's corporate farming law would ensure that agricultural land remain in the

1. hands of producers and retains the agricultural value of the land used in energy development.
- 2.
3. I. Prohibit Right of First Refusal by Developers
4. Developers should not be able to obtain the right of first refusal in lease options/contracts. Right
5. of first refusal allows a developer to tie up land, and/or reduce marketability of landowner's land
6. without purchasing an option. For example, a developer may purchase options on four out of eight
7. sites on a farmer's property and then takes right of first refusal on the remaining four. Basically,
8. the developer has a de facto option on the remaining four without having to purchase the lease
9. option. The marketability to other developers is reduced because the first developer has the first
10. chance to develop the property.
- 11.
12. J. Disclosure of Actual Lease Payments in Contracts
13. Requires that actual lease payments, potential premiums and formula used to determine said
14. premiums be established and disclosed as a condition of a final lease agreement during negotiation
15. of a contract.
- 16.
17. K. Three-Day Cooling Off Period
18. Allows three-day cooling off period after lease agreement is signed. This allows landowner a window
19. to reconsider if, for example, his attorney has an objection to the contract language.
- 20.
21. L. Prohibition of Severability of Surface Rights and Wind/Carbon/Mineral Rights.
22. Land ownership should not be severed from natural resources associated with the surface.
- 23.
24. M. We recommend there be a provision for a Pugh clause in natural resource development contracts.
- 25.
26. N. Damage Compensation
27. We support a damage compensation law that compensates farm operators and landowners when any
28. drilling plans, pipeline, land disturbance or other resource development affects water, property and other
29. interests.
- 30.
31. O. We support allowing the ND Mediation Service to settle disputes between property owners and
32. energy companies.
- 33.

### 34. **3. MINERAL RIGHTS**

35. A. Our goal is the restoration of severed mineral rights to the surface owner.
- 36.
37. B. We favor legislation prohibiting credit institutions from separating mineral rights from land that they
38. acquire through foreclosure or other means.
- 39.
40. C. Owners of severed mineral interests and the lease companies should be required to pay for or
41. reimburse the surface owner for the additional costs and expense paid by the surface owners in
42. re-certification of their abstracts of title.
- 43.
44. D. We urge legislation to divide the present real estate tax so that a percentage would be paid by the
45. surface owner and a percentage be paid by the mineral owner. If the mineral owner should become

1. delinquent in payment of this tax, the severed mineral acres shall be returned to the surface owner
2. upon payment of the delinquent tax.
- 3.
4. E. We recommend that all mineral leases require a royalty payment to the surface owner, as well as
5. to the mineral owner.
- 6.
7. F. We oppose the State of North Dakota trying to acquire mineral right interests under the high water
8. mark of any North Dakota waters.
- 9.
10. G. We support the establishment of an independent oversight study to gauge the compliance with
11. current oil and gas regulations.
- 12.

#### 13. **4. LAND USE**

14. A. We support a comprehensive statewide land use policy with township and county zoning programs
15. to protect agriculture's economic interest and to assure a maximum amount of fertile land for future
16. production of food and fiber. We endorse a land use policy that secures private ownership and
17. proper use of land with minimum government interference. We emphasize that the township and
18. county zoning programs should be the only governing programs regulating zoning.
- 19.
20. B. We support land appraisals being conducted by independent third-party entities and not land
21. management companies who rent out land on behalf of the owners.
- 22.
23. C. We urge legislation that establishes and maintains a central location for a database of zoning
24. ordinances that are created by political subdivisions (i.e. counties, cities and townships).
- 25.
26. D. As farmers and ranchers, we reserve the right to determine the use and future use of our land. We
27. need to explore options that will combine the best management of our land with the best economic
28. decisions for our farms. North Dakota Farmers Union recognizes that easements are one tool
29. farmers may employ to meet both objectives, however, we are opposed to perpetual easements.
- 30.
31. E. Lands acquired for wildlife should be subject to the same obligations to provide routing for utilities,
32. highways, waterway maintenance and other public uses as are privately-owned lands.
- 33.
34. F. Eminent domain should be reserved for public projects. Where eminent domain proceedings may
35. eventually be used, individual notification and public hearings must be held before the project is
36. allowed to be implemented. Severance damages should include payment for the diminution of
37. remaining land values and increased expenses and inconvenience suffered by affected landowners
38. and operators. All initial court expenses, including attorneys' and appraisers' fees, must be borne
39. by the constructing agency in condemnation proceedings. Consideration should be given to routes
40. which minimize adverse human impact.
- 41.
42. G. We support the preservation of section line identity by state and local governments.
- 43.
44. H. We support archaeological preservation; however, we oppose any act or regulation that creates
- 45.

1. undo burdens upon local governments and local producers. Therefore, if archaeological surveys  
2. and mitigation of sites on private property is a requirement of the federal or state government,  
3. those costs should be paid for by the federal or state government.

4.  
5. I. We oppose any resolution requiring a tribal monitor to accompany NRCS cultural specialists on  
6. all cultural resource inventories conducted, unless the tribe covers their cost.

7.  
8. J. We oppose the Forest Service range and environmental impact statement on the national grasslands,  
9. since it creates economic hardship for communities, counties and livestock producers. Since  
10. livestock producers have a good track record in conservation, we urge that future draft proposals be  
11. accomplished with proper range research and that livestock grazing be given equal consideration  
12. with other multiple uses on the national grasslands.

13.  
14. K. Companies laying pipeline or burying cable must be responsible for spraying weeks before  
15. excavating, planting a cover crop on the disturbed soil and mandatory controlling of weeds for  
16. three years to prevent the spread of noxious weeds.

17.  
18. **5. LAND TRANSFER**

19. A. We recommend a state program to facilitate transfer of family farms from one generation to the  
20. next. We encourage all members to explore estate planning and transfer of property.

21.  
22. B. We recommend that coal companies sell back land in the same size or smaller parcels than the  
23. land originally purchased from the landowner.

24.  
25. C. We favor the enactment of federal tax incentives for landowners to sell or lease land to beginning  
26. or smaller-than-average-sized farmers.

27.  
28. D. We oppose landowners retaining “hunting rights” after selling their land.

29.  
30. E. We support the transfer of property from the Corps of Engineers to the original owners or heirs of  
31. land taken about the “take line” **ABOVE THE HIGH-WATER MARK** in riparian areas or land taken  
32. when the Garrison and Oahe Dams were built.

# SECTION VII. NATURAL RESOURCES AND THE FAMILY FARM

Public and privately-owned land, mineral and other resources should be conserved and administered in the interest of all people.

## **1. SOIL AND WATER STEWARDSHIP**

A. Land and water stewardship is part of the social contract between food producers and the rest of the society. Producers have a responsibility to maintain and improve the productivity of the land. In return, they should be rewarded for their stewardship by farm programs which provide a prosperous livelihood for the farm family.

B. Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) should work to achieve the mutually beneficial objectives of proper stewardship and the maintenance of family farm agriculture.

### C. Conservation Planning

(1) A conservation plan should be jointly developed by the farm operator and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for each farm unit. This plan should designate which highly-erodible soils should not be tilled and which can be tilled with approved conservation practices. The plan should clearly map and document both existing and drained wetlands, as well as any drains and channels. The plan should consider all soil conditions in the conservation of the wetlands, as well as the maintenance of existing drains and channels.

(2) Such a conservation planning system should replace the existing sodbuster and swampbuster provisions and should be supervised and approved by the Farm Service Agency (FSA) committee process, with the technical assistance of the NRCS.

(3) Producers should be allowed to remedy inadvertent or unavoidable failures to carry out conservation plan practices. Otherwise, penalties should be based on the degree of the violation. Loss of full federal farm program benefits should be imposed only in cases of purposeful destruction of conservation practices.

### D. Conservation Funding

(1) We believe family farmers and ranchers are stewards of the land – that is, we are aware of our impact now and on future generations. We strive for a balance of natural resources and production of food and fuel. That balance is a difficult one to strike, and that's why we are concerned how the word "conservation" is defined and who defines it.

(2) We believe that any funding of conservation projects, including projects funded by grants from the oil extraction tax, must meet the following parameters:

(a) Oil extraction and production taxes should first be used to address infrastructure, emergency services, education, water, and safety needs.

1. (b) Any such fund must not be enshrined in the constitution. Doing so limits the opportunity
2. for public debate and ties the hands of the people.
- 3.
4. (c) The fund must be capped, so that we can continue to evaluate and fund our state's
5. priorities over time.
- 6.
7. (d) The governing structure must include agriculture's voice; NDFU specifically must have
8. a seat at the table.
- 9.
10. (e) The funding opportunities must be made available for programs meeting all definitions
11. of conservation, including stewardship practices on working lands, such as tools that
12. enhance soil health, water quality, plant diversity, and animal systems. These working
13. lands projects should receive priority consideration.
- 14.
15. (f) We also advocate that the fund be forward looking, not only from a conservation perspective
16. but also from a land use perspective. Any such funding must not be used to acquire land.
17. Further, it must not tie up land for more than 20 years.
- 18.
19. (3) From a family farm or rancher's perspective, the land is our livelihood and our legacy. Any
20. public funding for conservation must strike a balance to protect both.
- 21.
22. (4) We urge that half of the funds allocated to the Natural Resources Trust Fund should be
23. designated as a soil conservation trust fund to assist agriculture producers.
- 24.

## 25. **2. CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM**

26. Conservation programs should be good for the environment, reward stewardship, discourage speculative  
27. development of fragile land resources, strengthen family farming and enhance rural communities. The  
28. Conservation Reserve Program should be extended, providing that:

- 29.
30. A. The most environmentally-sensitive land be given first opportunity for extension.
- 31.
32. B. There are incentives to aid beginning farm and ranch families in obtaining land leaving the
33. Conservation Reserve Program.
- 34.
35. C. The new CRP payments be based on local rental rates.
- 36.
37. D. There should be stricter criteria for land to be eligible for CRP. There need to be limits on how much
38. land can be enrolled in CRP in a particular area to limit the impact CRP has on rural communities.
39. ~~CRP should not be a retirement program for farmers. Whole farms should not be able to be enrolled.~~
40. ~~There should not be more than 35% of the tillable acres in a farm unit enrolled in CRP.~~
- 41.
42. E. CRP acreages need to be closely monitored by NRCS with enough funding to enforce contract
43. requirements for adequate weed, insect and fire control, and mandatory noxious weed control.
- 44.
- 45.



1. F. In times of a disaster declaration, all interested livestock producers must apply to FSA for the
2. opportunity to hay or graze CRP lands. Applications must include a three-year history of livestock
3. animal units. Haying or grazing shall include all program contracts and should be conducted in
4. such a manner as to enhance feed quality and minimize negative impact on wildlife. Areas outside
5. the severely affected areas should be allowed to donate only to the severely affected counties
6. without reduction in payments.
- 7.
8. ~~G. We recommend that all CRP, WRP, etc., be allowed to be hayed or grazed every other year to~~
9. ~~reduce the amount of dead grass/vegetation that would promote additional kindling/fuel for wildfires,~~
10. ~~which would also increase biodiversity.~~
- 11.
12. H. Conservation Reserve Program funding should not be taken from farm support payments/deficiency
13. payments.
- 14.
15. I. In the case of an existing grass stand, CRP acres that are to be re-enrolled should not have to be
16. reseeded or interseeded with other grass types.
- 17.
18. J. Land managed with appropriate organic standards while enrolled in CRP should be eligible for
19. organic certification upon leaving the program.
- 20.
21. K. We support the establishment of a short-term conservation reserve program of 3-5 years for land
22. that has temporarily lost productivity.
- 23.

### 24. **3. ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM**

25. The federal program provides cost share for conservation practices that improve groundwater quality,  
26. plant diversity, wildlife habitat, animal waste systems and conversion of existing irrigation systems. These  
27. are all statewide resource concerns that have been prioritized by the State Technical Committee. The  
28. Committee has determined that animal feeding operations are a priority for EQIP funding. We support  
29. this program and urge that funds be targeted to small and medium sized farms and ranches, ~~with a limit~~  
30. ~~of \$150,000.~~

### 32. **4. SOIL AND WATER MANAGEMENT**

33. A. We favor allowing county FSA committees the flexibility to adjust the rules for CRP and for cover
34. crop on conserving acres to fit into programs already being used by individual farms to control
35. erosion.
- 36.
37. B. We favor continuation and increased federal and state funding of agricultural conservation programs
38. (ACP) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) be kept as a stand alone agency.
- 39.
40. C. To encourage more tree plantings, we encourage FSA to include the cost of tree maintenance for
41. the first ten years after planting as part of its cost-sharing program.
- 42.
43. D. We support the Small Watershed Program for proper water management.
- 44.
- 45.

1. E. Administration of swampbuster provisions should be regulated by one government agency to
2. ensure that agricultural concerns are fully considered. We strongly support flexibility to allow
3. channel maintenance and clean-out, maintain proper water management and provide an economic
4. incentive to the landowner for retaining wetlands.
- 5.
6. F. We urge that multiple use of federal rangelands be closely monitored to ensure that agricultural
7. usage is maintained at present levels in relation to recreational and other resource usage.
- 8.
9. G. We oppose the wilderness designation of land in North Dakota.
- 10.
11. H. We urge the North Dakota Legislature to continue a program in ND to address the soil salinity
12. problem. Salinity specialists should coordinate educational and research efforts among NDSU,
13. Extension, Soil Conservation Districts, NRCS, farm and commodity organizations and others.
- 14.
15. I. We recommend detailed soil surveys and groundwater surveys for our entire state and urge the
16. Legislature to fund these projects.
- 17.
18. J. NDFU supports adequate funding of the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) **EQIP** and
19. other conservation programs.
- 20.
21. K. We urge NRCS to implement the CSP program as it was originally designed to reward good
22. stewardship and to provide incentives for enhanced conservation efforts.
- 23.

## 24. **5. WETLANDS POLICY**

25. A. Wetlands of less than one acre should not be under any jurisdiction by state or federal agencies.
- 26.
27. B. The exemption of Type 1 wetlands from swampbuster provisions is a must.
- 28.
29. C. When dealing with farmland, primary consideration should be given to the economic impact on
30. agriculture.
- 31.
32. D. Landowners should be able to move water within the boundaries of their property without regulation,
33. interference or easements.
- 34.
35. E. We support no net gain of wetland acres.
- 36.
37. F. We urge no net gain of wetland acres in mitigation banking.
- 38.
39. G. We urge funding of the federal and state waterbank programs to eliminate the need for federal
40. acquisition of wetlands.
- 41.
42. H. Any policy developed should recognize the function of wetlands as an agricultural property.
- 43.
44. I. Water outside the boundary of a wetland should be considered sheetwater and not subject, under
45. any circumstances, to jurisdiction by state or federal agencies.

1. J. We oppose the Corps of Engineers being given jurisdiction over farmed wetlands.
- 2.
3. K. We oppose the use of special interest groups making wetland determinations.
- 4.
5. L. Federal agencies should be consistent with rules they use to determine wetlands, as well as wetland
6. management practices. The rules should be based on sound science.
- 7.
8. M. The NRCS wetland mitigation process is ~~too cumbersome and slow~~. There needs to be a simplified
9. process that should be finished within one year.
- 10.
11. N. We urge NDFU to study and hopefully to implement a plan for creating a wetland mitigation bank,
12. even if an easement is required.
- 13.

14. **6. RURAL WATER FUNDING**

15. A. We encourage adequate state and federal funding to support affordable rural water systems,
16. including grants to cities.
- 17.
18. B. We encourage the education of all North Dakotans on the need for a clean, safe and plentiful
19. supply of water.
- 20.

21. **7. STATE WATER POLICY**

22. Since our state's water belongs to all the people of North Dakota, the North Dakota Water Commission

23. should manage our water resources to the greatest advantage to our citizens, with all areas of the state

24. being given equitable consideration.

25.

26. A. We call for adoption of a comprehensive state water policy which will allow North Dakota to claim
27. its rightful share of water resources.
- 28.
29. B. We support funding for water projects by the federal government due to the long-standing commitment
30. that was made to the people of North Dakota for diversion of Missouri River water.
- 31.
32. C. We believe supplemental state funding of water development projects to be in the best interest of
33. North Dakota.
- 34.
35. D. The Devils Lake Basin continues to have problems with excess water and flooding. We support the
36. outlet that would bring water levels down to 1,446 feet above sea level in a responsible manner
37. for stabilization and emergency relief, as long as the quantity of water being sent downstream is
38. controlled.
- 39.
40. E. The state should take over partial responsibility for the design, construction, operation and
41. maintenance of the Garrison Diversion project main delivery system; the objective being to make
42. Missouri River water available to the Sheyenne and Red River Valleys, the Devils Lake Basin and
43. the Oakes Test Area along the James River.
- 44.
- 45.

- 1. (1) Garrison Diversion should be primarily a federally funded responsibility and we urge its
- 2. continued funding.
- 3.
- 4. F. We urge that in water and wetland disputes, an unbiased third party be used, such as the North
- 5. Dakota Mediation Service.
- 6.
- 7. G. We support better water management by local, state, federal and international officials to prevent
- 8. flooding.
- 9.

10. **8. FEDERAL AND STATE WATER DEVELOPMENT**

- 11. A. We urge adoption of the following order of preference in the use of Missouri River water: (1) domestic
- 12. and municipal consumption, (2) agriculture, (3) hydroelectric power, (4) industrial consumption, (5)
- 13. wildlife and recreation and (6) navigation.
- 14.
- 15. B. We oppose the federal government (Army Corps of Engineers) charging storage fees for North
- 16. Dakota water.
- 17.
- 18. C. We oppose the use of prime farmlands for flood control projects wherever possible. We favor
- 19. floodways which require less land acquisition for project works and wildlife mitigation than large dam
- 20. projects. We favor zoning laws prohibiting construction in flood-prone areas. We oppose the use of
- 21. land for the purpose of staging or storing of flood waters as an element of a flood control project,
- 22. without the consent of the affected landowners. If consent is received, adequate compensation
- 23. must be provided; including damages relating to delayed or prevented planting and/or harvesting
- 24. of crop, hay or pastureland.
- 25.
- 26. D. When flood control measures such as dikes, river diversions and dry dams that affect prime ag
- 27. land are proposed, the entities promoting the project must have a detailed independent study of
- 28. the watershed and how the proposed project will affect prime ag land. Then the entities promoting
- 29. the project must use these studies to locate the project to minimize the affect on prime ag land
- 30. over other factors.
- 31.
- 32. E. We oppose broadening the definition of what waters are covered under the Clean Water Act.
- 33.
- 34. F. We are opposed to the broadening of the federal government's jurisdiction over a group of waters,
- 35. such as the entire Prairie Pothole Region, simply because the bodies of water are near each other.
- 36.

37. **9. FISH AND WILDLIFE**

- 38. A. An upper limit must be established on the total acreage controlled in North Dakota by private, state
- 39. and federal fish and wildlife agencies. Land acquisitions, easements, mitigation acreages and
- 40. wildlife projects must be reviewed in the context of a statewide wildlife resources conservation and
- 41. development plan which is coordinated among the various state and federal agencies. The plan
- 42. must take into account the agricultural and environmental characteristics of the different regions
- 43. of the state. An appeal system based on fairness and equity shall be established.
- 44.
- 45.

1. (1) The State Industrial Commission, with the advice and consent of county commissioners and  
2. other appropriate public officials from the affected areas, should have final review of land  
3. acquisitions, easements, etc., in relationship to the statewide wildlife plan.  
4.
5. B. We support legislation that would require the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), ND Game  
6. and Fish Department (NDGF) and all other public agencies to disclose the actual number of acres  
7. within their control, including, but not limited to, owned land, easements, water acres, land acres,  
8. refuges and all other tracts.  
9.
10. C. We support legislation which would require USFWS and NDGF to disclose all donors and all  
11. funding they receive as cost-sharing, matching funds, or in-kind contributions from all private or  
12. public entities.  
13.
14. D. All wildlife easement contracts taken by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in North Dakota should specify  
15. the exact wetlands included under the contract and be renegotiated every 15 years or less or upon change  
16. of ownership. We oppose the granting of perpetual wetland easements to the Fish and Wildlife Service.  
17.
18. E. We oppose the Fish and Wildlife Service imposing easements on any property acquired by FSA  
19. or any government agency.  
20.
21. F. We support the comprehensive delineation of pre-1976 easements in order to specifically and  
22. definitively determine what land is currently under easement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.  
23.
24. G. No governmental agency should exercise the power of eminent domain in obtaining any acreage  
25. for mitigation and wildlife. Such acreage should only be obtained on a willing seller basis.  
26.
27. H. We support a control and compensation program for crop and livestock damages by wildlife (~~e.g.~~  
28. ~~blackbirds, coyotes~~), including the issuance of extra hunting licenses year round to landowners in  
29. areas of severe wildlife depredation. These licenses could be used for personal use or resale by  
30. the landowner. We further support a bounty program to control predators within the state, funded  
31. by the state.  
32.
33. I. We encourage Game & Fish to issue the appropriate amount of deer and moose licenses per unit to  
34. manage deer and moose populations in that unit.  
35.
36. J. Any land or restrictive easements held by any government entity should be subject to paying in-  
37. lieu-of property taxes amounting to 100 percent of taxes due on that property.  
38.
39. K. We are opposed to the introduction of non-native fish species into our state's natural waters unless  
40. such species are approved by the American Fisheries Society and the North Dakota Legislature.  
41. We support the ongoing efforts to limit the entrance and spread of aquatic nuisance species (ANS)  
42. in North Dakota.  
43.  
44.  
45.

1. L. We recommend that the Fish and Wildlife Service be allowed to burn only if no one can use the  
2. grass for haying or grazing. We commend the Fish and Wildlife Service for allowing haying and  
3. grazing.  
4.
5. M. We encourage legislation to limit/restrict the powers of U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the North Dakota  
6. State Game and Fish Department and to reorganize these departments to be more cooperative  
7. with farmers and ranchers.  
8.
9. (1) We encourage the Game and Fish Department, wildlife and conservation groups to  
10. communicate with landowners and landowner groups to work toward building a better  
11. relationship between the hunter and landowner.  
12.
13. N. We oppose the boundary fencing policy of the Corps of Engineers and the North Dakota Game  
14. and Fish Department in the fencing of Lake Sakakawea and Lake Oahe.  
15.
16. O. We oppose the use of social security numbers on hunting and fishing applications and licenses.  
17.
18. P. The number of mountain lions are increasing and are a threat to North Dakotans and their livestock.  
19. We would like the ND Game and Fish Department to manage numbers as appropriate.  
20.
21. Q. Due to the increase in waterfowl, the waterfowl hunting season should not restrict any hunter from  
22. participating in the full season, including out-of-state hunters.  
23.
24. R. We recommend a percentage of all hunting license fees be paid to counties and townships for  
25. maintenance of roads and the eradication of noxious weeds.  
26.
27. S. We support the North Dakota Landowner-Sportsman Council and hunter safety programs in their  
28. efforts to encourage good hunting practices and respect for property rights and urge increased  
29. funding for the Hunter Safety Program.  
30.
31. T. The landowner or operator should not be held liable for accidents occurring as a result of hunting,  
32. visitation or trespassing on their property.  
33.
34. U. We believe that all private land should be considered "*POSTED*." NDFU supports the property  
35. rights of landowners.  
36.
37. V. The endangered species issue requires a balanced and fair resolution which protects the environment,  
38. while at the same time considering the economic impact on agriculture and other institutions.  
39.

40. **10. STRIP MINING AND OIL EXPLORATION**

41. A. We believe continuing research and reviews of reclamation methods must be ongoing in order to  
42. improve the productivity of reclaimed mined land. Modern conservation techniques, which improve  
43. the productivity of specific problem areas, should be part of an improved reclamation plan.  
44.  
45.

1. B. We urge the Legislature to direct the PSC to set a timeline for completion of reclamation and final
2. bond release once mining has ceased.
- 3.
4. C. The State Industrial Commission should supervise the site restoration required of oil development
5. and exploration firms.
- 6.
7. D. NDFU supports efforts to protect existing water sources from damages related to seismographing
8. activities. We support efforts to restore the 1,320 foot setback requirements from all wells, springs
9. and farmsteads.
- 10.
11. E. We support increasing the notice requirement for seismograph testing to at least 30 days to allow
12. for wells to be tested prior to seismograph testing.
- 13.
14. F. We are concerned about the potential environmental damage caused by coal bed methane
15. production and development, and urge environmental impacts be studied prior to permits being
16. issued.
- 17.
18. G. We are concerned about the potential environmental damage caused by runoff of surface water
19. from oil production locations onto surrounding farmland, and urge regulation by the appropriate
20. state agency.
- 21.
22. H. We support a study resolution to research and provide recommendations addressing the problems
23. with the current regulations that oversee saltwater disposal systems.
- 24.
25. I. The use of hydraulic fracturing is an important component in oil drilling and exploration. We propose
26. that the names and origins of all chemicals used in that process must be identified as safe with
27. the state and that list be made available to the public before they are used.
- 28.
29. J. We encourage the state to develop policy overseeing a safe, efficient and organized pipeline
30. gathering system for oil, gas and saltwater lines, including pipeline monitoring and leak detection
31. systems.
- 32.
33. K. North Dakota law requires the director of Oil and Gas Division (regulating agency) to carry out the
34. duties of the director of Mineral Resources Division (promoting agency). We urge that the North
35. Dakota Legislature separate the duties of promoting petroleum and regulating petroleum in order
36. to create a checks and balance system that will fully protect the rights of landowners separately
37. from promotion.
- 38.

39. **11. RESOURCE DEPLETION AND IMPACTS**

40. The agricultural, economic, social and environmental impacts associated with energy development must

41. be considered an energy production cost. State or local government should not be asked to subsidize

42. energy consumers by accepting such cost.

43.

44.

45.



1. A. The coal severance tax must be maintained over the coal conversion tax so the economic benefits  
2. may be realized within the state. North Dakota should establish a severance tax based on a  
3. percentage of the average cost of coal as determined by a state assessor at the mine mouth.  
4.  
5. B. We urge the use of a portion of the oil extraction fund monies to fund research and development  
6. of renewable energies.  
7.

8. **12. ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT**

9. Our land, air, water and soil provide us with the ability to survive and require greater care as population increases.  
10.

11. A. We need more information and education concerning the present condition of our water supply  
12. and what we can and should do to prevent any further contamination.  
13.

14. **B. WE ENCOURAGE THE PRACTICE OF WEATHER MODIFICATION TO BE CONTINUALLY  
15. MONITORED AND TO PROVIDE THE PUBLIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE EFFECTS WEATHER  
16. MODIFICATION TECHNOLOGIES HAVE ON OUR CLIMATE.**  
17.

18. B C. We urge that any standards applied to farm fertilizer and chemical run-off should also be applied  
19. to all users of chemicals and fertilizers.  
20.

21. C D. We urge all public facilities to recycle whenever possible.  
22.

23. D E. We urge legislation that would encourage recycling, including scrap metal, in North Dakota. We  
24. also urge greater use of biodegradable products.  
25.

26. E F. We favor legislation to prohibit the sale of beverages in non-returnable and non-recyclable containers  
27. and the institution of a deposit fee to provide a strong incentive for their return.  
28.

29. F G. We believe that farmers, chemical manufacturers and the N.D. Department of Agriculture should  
30. be involved in finding solutions, including recycling, for the proper disposal of crop protection  
31. containers.  
32.

33. G H. We support the disposal of old and unlabeled crop pesticides under Project Safe Send and urge  
34. the North Dakota Legislature to fully fund Project Safe Send.  
35.

36. H I. We are opposed to the importation of out-of-state waste, hazardous or otherwise.  
37.

38. I J. We are opposed to the transportation of food products in containers that have carried incompatible  
39. substances such as toxic chemicals or waste.  
40.

41. J K. We strongly urge our country to refrain from signing environmental treaties, such as the Kyoto  
42. Protocol (global warming treaty), with other countries without extensive research and open debate  
43. within the United States.  
44.  
45.

1. **K L.** We are concerned about the growing number and application of regulations concerning storage
2. and use of farm fuels and chemicals. We urge review of these regulations, development of a clear
3. and concise guide to aid compliance with sensible regulations and removal from the law of those
4. regulations which are not enforced.
- 5.
6. **L M.** We urge Congress to pass legislation to exempt agriculture from the EPA fuel oil storage rules.
- 7.
8. **M N.** We urge the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to place more emphasis on preliminary planning
9. assessment with the states and tribes before expanding the Visibility Protection Program through
10. the addition of the regional haze concept, and to repropose a rule addressing a more reasonable
11. and realistic approach to the issues of regional haze.
- 12.
13. **N O.** We encourage EPA to adopt the North Dakota Health Department's finding, utilizing actual air quality
14. monitoring data and improved computer modeling, that the State of North Dakota is in compliance
15. with all EPA air quality requirements for Class 1 areas.
- 16.
17. **O P.** We recommend that the implementation of federal regulations for air quality by the EPA at coal
18. power plants be stopped and allow Congress and the State of North Dakota to set regulations for
19. emissions from coal-fired power plants.
- 20.
21. **P Q.** We support EPA regulation of coal ash as a non-hazardous waste, and strongly oppose the
22. proposal that EPA regulate coal ash as a hazardous waste. Coal ash has beneficial uses as a
23. product in highway and building construction, and recycling coal ash is often a better alternative
24. than impoundment as an industrial waste. If regulated as a hazardous waste, the beneficial uses
25. of coal ash would be severely curtailed.
- 26.
27. **Q R.** NDFU encourages all government officials to visit North Dakota coal-fired power plants, which are
28. some of the cleanest in the world.
- 29.
30. **R S.** We strongly urge mandatory eradication of noxious weeds on oil well locations to prevent spread
31. of noxious weeds onto private farmland and keeping weeds under mandatory control before going
32. to seed and becoming a tumbleweed, causing deterioration of fencelines and farmyards.
- 33.
- 34.
- 35.
- 36.
- 37.
- 38.
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- 40.
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1. **SECTION VIII. ENERGY AND THE FAMILY FARM**

2.  
3. Energy is vital to securing our nation's need for food and fiber. This nation must establish a long-range  
4. national energy policy that emphasizes conservation and wise use of our energy resources. We must renew  
5. national efforts to reduce our reliance on imported energy and move toward greater energy self-sufficiency.  
6.

7. North Dakota Farmers Union supports a balanced, comprehensive energy policy which seeks energy  
8. independence for the United States, protects our nation's environment and recognizes the special needs of  
9. America's agricultural sector. In addition, a national energy policy must reverse the trend toward concentration  
10. of ownership and control of sources, production and distribution of energy.  
11.

12. In order to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels, development of renewable sources of energy must be  
13. a priority. This must include economic and technical assistance for family farmers wanting to transition into  
14. increased application of alternative forms of energy.  
15.

16. Growth and development of our renewable energy has great potential to provide additional income to North  
17. Dakota's family farmers and ranchers. In addition, our cooperatives can play a leading role in the distribution  
18. and marketing of these energy products.  
19.

20. **1. NATIONAL ENERGY RESERVE**

21. A. Strategic Petroleum Reserve

22. Petroleum supply disruptions represent a direct threat to this nation's national and economic security.  
23. They are particularly difficult for farmers and those in rural areas who bear the burden of crisis-  
24. driven price increases long after the actual disruption. Therefore, we urge prioritization of agricultural  
25. petroleum supplies at competitive prices. These supplies are necessary for the uninterrupted  
26. production of our nation's food supply. We believe it is essential that Strategic Petroleum Reserve  
27. supplies be allocated to cooperative and other independent domestic refineries at equitable prices  
28. at the early stages of any supply disruption.  
29.

30. B. Renewable Energy Reserve

31. We support the creation of a renewable energy reserve to help alleviate our dependence on  
32. nonrenewable energy sources and reduce price-depressing supplies of wheat, feed grains and  
33. oilseeds.  
34.

35. **2. ENERGY DEVELOPMENT**

36. A. Public Power and Resource Development

37.  
38. (1) Feasible hydroelectric sites should be investigated for public power projects organized to fully  
39. develop and protect all power, irrigation, water utilization, recreation, navigation and other uses.  
40.  
41. (2) Due to the shortage of electric energy in certain parts of the country, we encourage federal  
42. funding for the upgrade and development of transmission lines.  
43.  
44. (3) Consumer cooperatives and public agencies should be given priority in the allocation and  
45.

1. development of publicly-owned energy resources and in research for new energy sources on  
2. a deferred bonus or royalty basis to allow these entities to compete for this source of energy.

3.  
4. (4) We support development of a state-funded refinery in North Dakota, similar to the State Mill  
5. and Elevator.

6.  
7. B. Research and Development of Alternative Energy Sources

8. We are concerned over our dependence on non-renewable and imported fuels that place our  
9. national security in jeopardy. Therefore, we encourage and support research and development of  
10. innovative and renewable energy sources such as solar, photovoltaic cells, fuel cells, micro turbines,  
11. geothermal, wind, hydrogen, methane, ethanol, biodiesel, solid waste fuels and other renewable,  
12. non-polluting energy sources. We support incentive programs for the production of biofuels.

13.  
14. (1) Wind Energy Development

15.  
16. (a) We recognize North Dakota's vast wind resources and urge development of the state's  
17. enormous potential for electricity generation from wind.

18.  
19. (b) Number one in wind resources, North Dakota has the ability to supply a significant  
20. amount of the nation's electricity needs from our wind; therefore, wind energy holds new  
21. income potential for farmers and rural landowners. Because of the income potential for  
22. agricultural producers, we encourage efforts to educate North Dakota farmers about their  
23. wind rights and issues.

24.  
25. (c) When wind energy leases have had no action taken on them after three years, the  
26. contracts should be considered ended. When a wind turbine is no longer producing power  
27. for one year, the turbine needs to be removed and the land reclaimed at the expense  
28. of the wind turbine/energy company. We need to have state laws concerning zoning  
29. regulations describing borders, setbacks and so forth.

30.  
31. (d) We support the protection of landowners by requiring wind turbine energy companies to  
32. purchase a "Decommissioning Bond" at the time of construction.

33.  
34. (e) Wind tower setbacks should be a minimum of one-half mile from an occupied dwelling  
35. unless consent is given by all affected property owners within the setback.

36.  
37. (f) We call for the state of North Dakota to encourage all state agencies and institutions to  
38. purchase a portion of its total energy from wind energy generated in this state.

39.  
40. (2) Coal Byproduct Development

41.  
42. We support the continued operation of the Dakota Gasification Plant for its contribution to the  
43. future energy independence of our nation and because of the additional research information  
44. it will provide.

1. (3) Ethanol Development

- 2.
3. (a) We support the use of ethanol and encourage education as to the benefits of its use.
- 4.
5. (b) We support continued state and federal assistance for alcohol-blended fuels,
6. provided such alcohol is produced and sold in the state of North Dakota from
7. products grown in the United States. Such assistance should be funded from
8. general revenues so that all North Dakotans contribute to the growth of this industry.
- 9.
10. (c) We believe that the state has an opportunity to press forward and become one of the
11. leading states who use ethanol. Therefore, we support the requirement of all gasoline
12. sold in North Dakota (except aviation fuels) to be blended with at least 15 percent ethanol.
- 13.
14. (d) We are opposed to the market concentration within the ethanol industry and encourage
15. the development of cooperative facilities.
- 16.
17. (e) We support allowing Ethyl Tertiary Butyl Ether (ETBE) refiners the ability to claim the
18. ethanol excise tax exemption at the blend point.
- 19.
20. (f) We encourage passage of national energy legislation that does not exempt manufacturers
21. from liability related to Methyl Tertiary Butyl Ether (MTBE).
- 22.
23. (g) We support domestic production of ethanol in the most efficient manner with use of U.S.
24. grown crops.
- 25.
26. (h) We call for ethanol-blended gas to be used in all state-owned vehicles.
- 27.
28. (i) We call for full implementation of the RFS as written and dictated by the original con-
29. gressional mandate. Any attempts or decisions to reduce ethanol use requirements by
30. administrative agencies or Congress should cease or be returned to their original levels.
- 31.
32. (j) We support the use of blender pumps. The state of North Dakota and our cooperatives
33. have invested heavily in blender pumps. We strongly urge CHS to accommodate local
34. cooperatives' use of blender pumps.
- 35.

36. **(K) EPA AND ALL GOVERNMENT REGULATORS SHOULD IMMEDIATELY REVERSE**

37. **STATEMENTS THAT SAY OR EVEN INDICATE IT IS ILLEGAL FOR SO-CALLED**

38. **NON-FLEX AUTO OWNERS TO FUEL WITH BLENDER (FLEX) PUMPS' E30.**

39.

40. (4) Biodiesel

- 41.
42. (a) We support the use of biodiesel and biodiesel-blended fuels to increase national security,
43. increase farm income and improve the environment.
- 44.
- 45.

- 1. (b) We encourage North Dakota to take the lead in the use of biodiesel. We support the
- 2. requirement of at least a two percent blend in all diesel sold at pumps in North Dakota.
- 3.
- 4. (c) We support biodiesel research and development of oilseed crops and animal byproducts
- 5. for use as biodiesel alternative fuels.
- 6.
- 7. (d) We encourage NDFU to take a lead in the development of the biodiesel industry in North
- 8. Dakota through leadership and potential investment.
- 9.

10. (5) Biofuel

- 11. (a) We strongly urge CHS, Inc. to promote the use of biofuels and provide consistent and
- 12. competitively priced supplies to our local co-ops.
- 13.

14. (6) Solar

- 15. (a) We support rural electric cooperatives with research on solar energy and commend them
- 16. on their investments.
- 17.

18. C. Coal

19. We support the use and development of coal as a low cost and reliable source of energy.

20.

21. **3. ENERGY COSTS**

22. A. We continue to strongly oppose any violation of the long-standing covenants between the

23. government and its citizens which clearly provide that energy be sold at the lowest possible rates

24. to consumers consistent with sound business principles.

25.

26. B. North Dakota's citizens have suffered shortages of energy in a state with ample supplies, we

27. recommend that the state of North Dakota become involved in securing sufficient supplies by

28. owning or leasing conventional or alternative energy production and transmission facilities.

29.

30. C. We support programs that provide grants and/or other incentives to low income families and small

31. businesses for energy audits and energy efficiency/weatherizing.

32.

33. D. We support the North Dakota Petroleum Marketers Association's attempt to enact Fair Competition

34. of Motor Fuels legislation which would prohibit the use of gasoline to be defined as a below-cost

35. seller.

36.

37. E. We fully support the state of North Dakota and its efforts to challenge the federal Clean Power

38. Plan as written. It will cause significant increases in electrical costs for our members. The EPA

39. has failed to give credit for investments already made in environmental controls and renewable

40. resources in our state.

41.

42. **4. PROTECT AND IMPROVE RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES**

43. A. We believe there is a continuing need for low interest loan programs for distribution, generation

44. and transmission cooperatives to assure energy at a reasonable cost to rural consumers.

45.

1. B. We oppose any attempts to dismantle the Rural Utility Services (RUS) program or to privatize the
2. RUS Revolving Fund.
- 3.
4. C. We support the Federal Financing Bank and emphasize that rural electric and telephone cooperatives
5. must continue to have and are entitled to have full and complete access to this institution.
- 6.
7. D. We oppose the sale of federally-owned dams and power generation and transmission facilities.
- 8.
9. E. We oppose the buyout and sellout of Rural Electric Cooperatives (RECs) to private power
10. companies and urge the state legislature to enact laws to protect RECs.
- 11.
12. F. We support the Territorial Integrity Act of 1965, which minimizes conflicts among suppliers of electricity,
13. allows orderly development of the state's electric utility infrastructure by minimizing disputes over
14. extensions of distribution lines and avoids wasteful duplication of costly capital investment in utility
15. facilities. In resolving disputes that do arise, the Public Service Commission should consider customer
16. choice, service reliability and avoidance of unnecessary duplication of services or investment. Regardless
17. of whether or how the electric industry may be deregulated or restructured in the future, the Territorial
18. Integrity Act serves the best interests of both rural and urban consumers. Accordingly, we strongly
19. oppose any legislative or regulatory action to abolish or weaken the Territorial Integrity Act.
- 20.
21. G. Electric cooperatives have a long and successful history of self-regulation by their member-owners.
22. We oppose efforts to bring electric co-ops under the regulation of the Public Service Commission.
- 23.
24. H. We urge that any mergers by RECs realize the impact on rural communities and service to their
25. consumers.
- 26.
27. I. We are opposed to attempts to deregulate the electric industry. We specifically oppose retail wheeling.
- 28.
29. J. We support adjusting the REC in-lieu-of property taxes to provide property tax relief equivalent to
30. the tax relief that investor-owned utilities have received and may receive in the future.
- 31.

## 32. **5. ENERGY DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS**

### 33. A. Electrical Generation and Transmission of Power

- 34.
35. (1) We believe that the state of North Dakota should study the feasibility of developing, owning and
36. managing a high voltage electric transmission line system to distribute our growing renewable
37. electric energy resource production throughout our country.
- 38.
39. (2) All high voltage transmission lines should be tied together in a national grid, be given the legal status
40. of common carriers and be located on land unsuitable for potential cropland or in close proximity
41. to section and quarter lines unless another route can be obtained without use of eminent domain.
42. Prime farmland should have a higher priority as an avoidance area than wildlife acreages.
- 43.
44. (3) When new transmission lines are placed, a yearly rental payment to the landowner should be
45. established. This would replace the one-time payment that is currently given to North Dakota



landowners. Periodic increases should be made to rental payments in relation to inflation.

(4) Where transmission line siting is subject to PSC approval, we ask that the ordinarily accepted condemnation statutory procedures granted to others using eminent domain be extended to REC transmission lines.

(5) We urge consumer-owned utilities to coordinate regional and interregional electric planning.

**6. CONSERVATION OF ENERGY**

A. We encourage participation in education and implementation of energy conserving practices.

B. We support an increase in the current Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards provided the technology develops better fuel economy, but not at the expense of vehicle power and performance.

1. **SECTION IX. ECONOMIC POLICY AND THE FAMILY FARM**

2.

3. The government of the United States and the state of North Dakota must have economic policies that provide  
4. public services efficiently and economically. Public services should be provided to all people equitably, and  
5. the cost of service should be paid by taxes collected in accordance with the principle of the ability to pay.  
6. Less of the total tax burden should come from property taxes and more from income and corporate taxes.

7.

8. **1. FEDERAL FISCAL POLICY**

9. A. We support a pay-as-you-go federal budget. This budget system would require that before new  
10. programs are established, a revenue source must also be enacted.

11.

12. B. In order to provide full accountability of tax revenues and government expenditures, the federal  
13. budget system must be based on normal business bookkeeping practices. Loans made by federal  
14. government agencies should be listed as repayable investments, not current expenditures. Annual  
15. operating costs should be separated from capital investments, such as public buildings, highways,  
16. multiple purpose water projects, conservation projects, equipment, etc. Amortization and/or  
17. depreciation schedules should be established for such capital investments and assets. Both the  
18. operational and capital budgets of a government department or agency should list the actual net  
19. cost of its programs to the taxpayer for that year.

20.

21. **2. MONETARY POLICIES**

22. A. We urge the United States Congress to pass a bill for reduction of our national deficit, which has  
23. grown to severe extremes. We do this with grave concern that it is a threat to the future welfare of  
24. this country, and feel that it is irresponsible to pass this deficit on to future generations.

25.

26. B. We urge the combination of the following policies to achieve a balanced budget and reduced  
27. interest rates:

28.

29. (1) Selective credit controls as needed in order to maintain the ability of farmers and small  
30. businesses to make the necessary investments for production.

31.

32. (2) Strict enforcement of antitrust and monopoly laws, together with close scrutiny of corporate  
33. mergers and acquisitions.

34.

35. (3) Reinstatement and enforcement of a reasonable corporate income tax.

36.

37. (4) Investment in new enterprises, rather than for acquisitions or mergers.

38.

39. (5) Improved federal purchasing procedures, including competitive bidding to reduce costs and  
40. to prevent abuses.

41.

42. (6) Establishment of usury laws with limits at affordable rates.

43.

44. C. We oppose federal and state legislation which authorizes interstate banking and supersedes the  
45. rights of states to regulate the ownership and control of banking within their states.

1. D. We support privacy rights which prevent banks and lending institutions from selling, trading, sharing
2. or giving information to anyone, for any reason at any time.
- 3.
4. E. Rural financial institutions have been burdened with excessive regulations aimed at Wall Street
5. banks but that have the unintended consequences of discouraging home lending in rural and
6. underserved areas by locally owned and/or locally-controlled financial institutions. We encourage
7. Congress to create a mortgage law exemption for locally-controlled institutions serving rural and
8. underserved areas from recently enacted federal laws and rules regarding mortgage escrow for
9. high priced loans, mortgage insurance requirements, appraisal requirements, mortgage licensing
10. and registration, and ability to pay/qualifying mortgages.
- 11.
12. F. We believe the North Dakota Legacy Fund should be used to benefit the future of North Dakota
13. and its residents. The use of the Legacy Fund should be prioritized as follows: (1) infrastructure,
14. (2) education, (3) agriculture, (4) conservation, (5) other. We feel that it should not be used for the
15. interests of out-of-state special interest groups, organizations or people.
- 16.
17. G. We insist that any discussions regarding the use of the Legacy Fund include NDFU, and we urge
18. NDFU to actively participate in representing farmer and rancher interests in those discussions, nor
19. should the principal be utilized as a funding source to meet state budget shortages.
- 20.

21. **3. FEDERAL TAXATION POLICY**

22. A. We urge that limitations be established to prevent tax-loss farming. We also urge that outside
23. investors be prohibited from using farm losses to offset non-farm income.
- 24.
25. B. We support enactment of permanent legislation to allow self-employed persons to deduct the full
26. cost of their health insurance, including premiums, deductibles, co-pays and long-term care on
27. federal and state income tax returns.
- 28.
29. C. Cash accounting should remain available to family farmers.
- 30.
31. D. We support a capital gains tax that is indexed to inflation.
- 32.
33. E. We would support a capital gains exemption if land is sold to a beginning farmer.
- 34.
35. F. We oppose a value-added tax or other national sales tax proposals because of the regressive
36. nature of such taxes.
- 37.
38. G. Farmers and ranchers should be allowed the same one-time capital gains benefit as homeowners,
39. when selling property.
- 40.
41. H. Federal estate tax exemption should be a minimum of \$5.34 million per individual and \$10.68 million
42. per couple, indexed to inflation, to protect the rights of farm and small business people to pass their
43. estate on to their heirs.
- 44.
- 45.

- 1. I. Any reduction of federal income tax should be targeted to the first \$50,000 of an individual's taxable
- 2. income.
- 3.
- 4. J. We oppose the flat tax concept because it puts family farmers, particularly beginning farmers, at
- 5. a disadvantage.
- 6.
- 7. K. We oppose any attempt to require the collection of highway taxes on off-road fuel from farmers
- 8. and ranchers.
- 9.
- 10. L. We urge the Legislature to study and find adequate funding to support the present off-road tax
- 11. refund programs.
- 12.
- 13. M. We urge the state to increase enforcement of off-road fuel use in highway vehicles.
- 14.
- 15. N. We support the flexibility of a farmer to defer a portion of their crop insurance payment **PROCEEDS**
- 16. to the next fiscal year.
- 17.
- 18. O. We encourage the federal government to continue with tax incentives that will increase production
- 19. of renewable fuels.
- 20.
- 21. P. We support permanent tax legislation for deductions of expenses accrued on the farm and ranch,
- 22. and support a \$500,000 limit of the 179 tax deduction.
- 23.

#### 24. **4. STATE AND LOCAL TAXES**

- 25. A. We favor continuation of the current North Dakota sales tax exemptions, especially for food,
- 26. prescription drugs, labor, services, utilities, farm and animal production inputs, used machinery
- 27. and parts. We also favor a rate lower than the regular tax rate for farm and animal production
- 28. machinery and equipment.
- 29.
- 30. B. We oppose eliminating the state income tax. If general fund taxes are to be reduced, the state
- 31. sales tax should be reduced to give more broad tax relief.
- 32.
- 33. C. We recommend that the legislature provide funding for state mandated programs that are to be
- 34. administered on a local or county level.
- 35.
- 36. D. We oppose any effort to levy charges on utility bills to raise state revenues for the purpose of
- 37. providing state and local services. We view such provisions as mechanisms designed to make
- 38. utility bills a method of collecting taxes. We feel this is regressive taxation, a concept we oppose.
- 39.
- 40. E. We oppose any proposal which would mandate a public vote on every state and local tax or fee
- 41. increase.
- 42.
- 43. F. For obtaining federal matching money, we favor relying on gas tax for the match rather than vehicle
- 44. license fees, as a more equitable source.
- 45.

1. G. We oppose any proposal to increase working capital needs of our petroleum cooperatives by
2. assessing the state highway taxes at the terminal.
- 3.
4. H. Due to commercial and industrial development in rural areas that creates an increased burden on
5. township roads, we support allowing townships the ability to assess and charge repairs to entities
6. causing damage.
- 7.
8. ~~I. We support tax reform that will equalize the price of all blends of ethanol and biodiesel with their~~
9. ~~respective fuel counterparts.~~
- 10.
11. J I. We support incentives and tax credits to U.S. producers to move North Dakota forward in the use
12. of renewable fuels.
- 13.
14. K J. We do not support a city sales tax to reduce property taxes.
- 15.
16. L K. We are opposed to exemptions to the oil extraction and production taxes. Additionally, we oppose
17. reductions in the rate of tax until the state replenishes and addresses unmet needs – including
18. but not limited to infrastructure build-out and repair, property tax relief, education, emergency and
19. health services – in rural North Dakota, and to be forward-looking and invest in the future of the
20. state.
- 21.
22. M L. We support the proper taxation of aggregate pits to support local infrastructure.
- 23.
24. N M. We support the reinstatement of the oil extraction tax of 6.5% rather than the current 5% level
25. enacted by the 2015 Legislature. We do support the continued elimination of the “trigger.”
- 26.

27. **5. PROPERTY TAX**

28. A. Real estate taxes on agriculturally-zoned land should be based on profitability, productivity, use
29. and soil types rather than market value. We call for updates to soil surveys to address productivity
30. changes, including soil salinity.
- 31.
32. B. We favor the exemptions of farm homes and buildings for real estate tax purposes.
- 33.
34. C. The off-farm income threshold for farm home exemption should be set at \$80,000.
- 35.
36. D. We support a balanced tax structure and local control. As a result, we support restructuring the
37. state tax system with property tax relief being a priority. However, we oppose elimination of property
38. taxes and we oppose elimination of income taxes. To meet these goals, we propose increasing
39. the percentage of sales, gross receipts, use, and motor excise tax collections to be deposited in
40. the state aid distribution fund for allocation to political subdivisions. We also support a property
41. tax system that imposes property taxes on the value of minerals.
- 42.
43. E. We are concerned about the loss of property tax collections due to economic development tax
- 44.
- 45.

1. abatements. This amounts to corporate subsidy, pitting one community against another and putting
2. an unfair burden on existing local property owners.
- 3.
4. F. We support legislation to mandate accountability of city and county economic development corporations.
- 5.
6. G. We oppose the removal of land from the tax base when it is bought by Native American tribes and
7. look for impact aid back to reservation counties.
- 8.
9. H. Because the oil and gas production tax is imposed in-lieu-of property taxes on oil and gas producing
10. properties, NDFU supports 80% of the oil and gas production tax going back to oil producing
11. counties and townships.
- 12.
13. I. We call on the ND Legislature to reduce existing property taxes.
- 14.
15. ~~J. We oppose the increased recertification requirements of township tax assessors and urge there~~
16. ~~be a more systematic implementation of new requirements to be an assessor.~~
- 17.

## 18. **6. NATIONAL AND STATE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS**

19. We favor reauthorization of the current federal highway program and preserving the allocation formula  
20. which allows rural states to maintain adequate highway construction and maintenance. To match  
21. increased federal highway funding, we support an increase in state gas taxes.

### 22. A. Rural Road System

- 23.
- 24.
25. (1) We favor federal and state government funding of farm-to-market, county and township roads
26. from gasoline or other tax revenue. Priority should be given to roads utilized for moving farm
27. products to regional markets.
- 28.
29. (2) We urge the state to return 100% of the excise tax to the State Highway Tax Distribution Fund.
- 30.
31. (3) Federal guidelines for extensive right-of-way and rigid construction specifications for farm-to-
32. market and rural roads must be revised for greater cost benefits and land use efficiency.
- 33.
34. (4) Our entire state highway system must be preserved and maintained at a quality level. We are
35. against reverting any of our state highways back to our counties.
- 36.
37. (5) North Dakota collects a use tax on agricultural fuels. We believe this tax should be based on
38. a per gallon rate rather than on a percentage basis. One hundred percent of this tax should
39. be returned to the townships and counties for rural road improvement.
- 40.
41. (6) Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) and other warning standards should be used and maintained for
42. farm equipment when traveling on roads.
- 43.
- 44.
- 45.

1. (7) We encourage all farmers to use proper precautions, such as flag cars or trailering headers,
2. when moving equipment down public roadways.
- 3.
4. ~~We oppose any attempt to exchange “no mow areas” with state school land.~~
- 5.
6. (8) We urge that the state of North Dakota require commercial aggregate haulers to tarp their
7. trucks.
- 8.
9. (9) Overload fines assessed on transports should go to townships or counties where collected
10. instead of going to the state general fund.
- 11.
12. (10) We urge the state of North Dakota to increase funding of road repairs and maintenance.
- 13.

#### 14. B. Rail Transportation

15. Federal rail transportation policy should recognize that deregulation of railroads cannot be treated in  
16. the same manner as deregulation of other industries. Policies should recognize that continuing rail  
17. mergers result in elimination of rail service to many communities. This results in the establishment  
18. of only one railroad service to entire portions of the country.

19.  
20. Regulation of the nation’s rail system industry is needed to assure that rural areas will not be  
21. denied adequate service, that captive shippers are not charged excessive rates, or excessive fuel  
22. surcharges and that railroads will adequately maintain trackage and crossings.

23.  
24. We support:

25. (1) Legislation that requires railroad companies to comply with antitrust laws and prove they meet
26. competitive requirements when a merger takes place.
- 27.
28. (2) A reasonable single and three-car rate.
- 29.
30. (3) Legislation that would allow open access to the rail system for a reasonable price.
- 31.
32. (4) The Surface Transportation Board encouraging the railroad to continue the co-loading of
33. rail cars. This in turn should help allow for the continued operation of the smaller elevators.
- 34.
35. (5) Public disclosure of contract freight rates allowed under the Staggers Deregulation Act.
- 36.
37. (6) Railroads being responsible for all the damages they cause on their property and eradication
38. of noxious weeds.
- 39.
40. (7) Amtrak services to rural cities.
- 41.
42. (8) Surface and mineral rights going to the adjacent landowner or lessee when lines are abandoned.
43. When land is abandoned by a railroad, it must first be offered to the adjacent landowners at
44. fair market value, as determined by the county in which it is located.
- 45.



- 1. (9) Railroads being held liable for cars not being delivered to elevators at set times.
- 2.
- 3. (10) State and federal mandates prioritizing rail service for agriculture commodity needs.
- 4.
- 5. (11) The Surface Transportation Board enforcing the laws that govern the railroads.
- 6. (12) All efforts to stabilize and safely transport Bakken crude.
- 7.
- 8. (13) Two engineers on board for all routes.
- 9.

10. We oppose:

- 11. (1) Inverse freight rates and the use of certificates of transportation due to the lack of competition in railway service in North Dakota.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14. (2) Shortening the turn-around time of rail cars at point-of-origin and point-of-destination. Sundays and holidays should not be counted in turn-around time.
- 15.
- 16.

17. C. Truck Transportation

- 18.
- 19. (1) We urge adoption of uniform state standards for truck weight and length limits.
- 20.
- 21. (2) Load limitations should be enforced to reduce the damage to our roads and highways.
- 22.
- 23. (3) We support raising the mile limit for commercial drivers license exemptions from 150 miles to statewide for farmers and ranchers transporting their own agricultural product.
- 24.
- 25.
- 26. (4) We support allowing persons 16 and older a CDL (Commercial Driver's License) for custom harvest purposes only.
- 27.
- 28.
- 29. (5) We urge the N.D. DOT to address the needs of all communities caused by the loss of rail service.
- 30.
- 31. (6) To prevent unsafe driving by truckers, we urge the elimination of incentive pay based on the number of loads delivered.
- 32.
- 33.

34. D. Water Transportation

- 35.
- 36. (1) We believe that reliable navigation structures on the Upper Mississippi are imperative to the welfare of agriculture and industry for transportation of grain and raw material, especially fertilizer.
- 37.
- 38.
- 39. (2) Because water transportation benefits the entire society, we oppose user fees for financing construction or operation of waterways or ports.
- 40.
- 41.
- 42.
- 43. (3) We support efforts to keep the Twin Ports and St. Lawrence Seaway competitive with other ports by building a larger seaway to support larger cargo ships.
- 44.
- 45.

1. (4) We support efforts to deepen and maintain ports in the Pacific Northwest, including those that  
2. load commodities in the Puget Sound and Columbia River area.  
3.

4. E. Air Transportation  
5.

6. (1) We urge that airline service to our cities be maintained and improved, and also that rural areas  
7. are not penalized in airline rate structures.  
8.

9. (2) We urge that rural representation be a requirement for any airport authority supported by rural  
10. taxes.  
11.

12. F. Bus Transportation  
13.

14. (1) We support an interstate bus transportation system to be provided and maintained.  
15.

16. **7. TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

17. A. We urge congressional support for the maintenance of a telephone industry structure which  
18. preserves the ability of rural telephone systems to offer quality telecommunication services to all  
19. rural subscribers at reasonable rates.  
20.

21. B. We endorse efforts to retain the existing principle that long distance toll carriers pay an equitable  
22. share for use of local telephone exchanges. We urge uniform toll rates, equitable payment by  
23. competing telecommunication services for their direct or indirect use of local exchange facilities and  
24. full authority for rural telephone co-ops (RTCs) to provide a complete range of broadband services.  
25.

26. C. We support the establishment and preservation of an enhanced 911 system in all of North Dakota,  
27. including cellular service and the continued development of text messaging 911 support.  
28.

29. D. We support efforts to provide competitively-priced, high-speed broadband access to the internet  
30. for rural Americans.  
31.

32. E. We strongly urge communication providers to add towers to provide reliable service for all areas  
33. of North Dakota with priority given to areas that rely on cellular services for emergency personnel.  
34.

35. F. We urge all rural telephone cooperatives to amend their bylaws to admit all customers to full membership.  
36.

37. **G. WE ENCOURAGE THE NORTH DAKOTA ATTORNEY GENERAL TO PLACE EMPHASIS ON**  
38. **EDUCATING THE PUBLIC ON HOW TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM AND REPORT**  
39. **TELEPHONE/CELL PHONE SCAMS.**  
40.

41. **9. TRANSPORTATION SAFETY**

42. A. We support requiring railroads to erect warning light signals on all crossings near schools.  
43.

44. B. We recommend the Highway Department cooperate with the railroad and share the cost of erecting  
45.

1. automatic warning signals at the more dangerous crossings.
- 2.
3. C. We encourage reflective strips be placed on all rail cars so they may be seen at night at rail crossings.
- 4.
5. D. We support safe driving practices which include Defensive Driving Courses and Alive at 25.
- 6.
7. E. We recommend the highway department install rumble strips on all paved roads.
- 8.
9. F. Cell phone use, including texting, while driving not only endangers drivers and their passengers, but
10. also others that are on the road. Using cell phone media devices while driving should be prohibited
11. in North Dakota.
- 12.
13. G. As a result of the nature of rural lifestyle, we support legislation that allows drivers to obtain licensing
14. at 14 years old.
- 15.

## 16. **9. INSURANCE**

17. A. We urge the current Auto Accident Reparations Act (Modified No-Fault) be amended to include a
18. formula to compensate self-employed individuals for loss of earnings based on their annual income.
- 19.
20. B. We recommend that the North Dakota Legislature enact into law a requirement that all custom
21. operators carry liability insurance to protect the farmer who hires them.
- 22.
23. C. We urge that liability against political subdivisions be limited to cases of gross negligence.
- 24.
25. D. We support a mandate from the state of North Dakota to all car insurance companies doing busi-
26. ness in the state to notify the state when a vehicle insurance is allowed to lapse.
- 27.
28. E. We believe there should be limitations established on the awards provided in liability and medical
29. malpractice cases.
- 30.
31. F. We urge the investigation of all repeat worker compensation claims.
- 32.
33. G. We oppose the privatization of Workforce Safety and Insurance. We recommend that WSI stay
34. under the governor's oversight.
- 35.
36. H. We support Workforce Safety and Insurance that is fair and equitable to both the employer and
37. the workers.
- 38.
39. I. We urge Congress to pass legislation that will help insurance and re-insurance companies cover
40. claims from acts of terrorism.
- 41.
- 42.
- 43.
- 44.
- 45.

1. **SECTION X. TECHNOLOGY AND THE FAMILY FARM**

2.  
3. Farmers and ranchers are open to the opportunities that technology can create in their operations. However,  
4. the benefits of new technologies must be weighed against costs and risks involved.  
5.

6. **1. NEW AND EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES**

7. A. We urge continued research and funding of alternative agricultural technologies and sustainable  
8. systems that would benefit family farmers.  
9.

10. B. We support the use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs or drones) for agricultural uses. But urge  
11. any data collected from UAVs remain private and secure unless chosen otherwise.  
12.

13. C. We believe that precision agriculture creates possibilities for producers to implement both cost-  
14. effective and conservation practices on their land.  
15.

16. **2. BIOTECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

17. Biotechnology, genetically modified or enhanced organisms, gene therapy and transgenics are terms of  
18. increasing importance to producers. Biotechnology affects a broad range of issues including production,  
19. income, trade, farm business structure, environment and food safety.  
20.

21. A. We are opposed to biotechnology being used to accelerate structural changes in U.S. agriculture  
22. that leads to further vertical integration of agribusiness and results in an even smaller share of the  
23. revenue from production going to the producer.  
24.

25. B. We acknowledge concerns that biotechnology is being used as a trade barrier, however, we respect  
26. other nations' sovereignty and food policies and urge open dialog, cooperation and understanding  
27. in trade negotiations relating to biotechnology.  
28.

29. C. We recognize that biotechnology presents both opportunities and risks for producers and consumers;  
30. therefore, we urge each application of biotechnology and its impact to be weighed individually, rather  
31. than accepting or rejecting biotechnology as a whole. In addition, we urge all individual applications  
32. to be evaluated as to its overall impact, including any economic, social, political, environmental,  
33. health and safety issues that may arise due to the new technology. Genetic material resulting from  
34. plant breeding and biotechnological research done in publicly funded institutions must be disclosed  
35. and remain in the public domain rather than private patents.  
36.

37. D. We encourage breeding of biotech and hybrid seed varieties by our land grant universities to  
38. promote market competition.  
39.

40. E. We recognize that sound, publicly-supported scientific research is necessary to answer the many  
41. questions which exist, and emphasize that any research plots must be isolated to prevent any  
42. possibility of contamination to our breeder, foundation, registered, certified and organic seed stocks.  
43.  
44.  
45.

1. F. We support the state, Congress and the Secretary of Agriculture imposing a moratorium on the  
2. introduction, importation, certification and commercialization of genetically-engineered wheat,  
3. including all classes of wheat, until issues of cross-pollination, liability, commodity and seed stock  
4. segregation, and market acceptance are adequately addressed.  
5.  
6. ~~G. We support legislation to exempt farmers from paying royalties on patented farm animals and  
7. technology fees on seeds that have been genetically modified.~~  
8.  
9. H G. We oppose the further use of tax dollars in developing terminator technology, e.g., a gene to ensure  
10. that seed will not reproduce. We urge legislation to prohibit the development and selling of seed  
11. that is sterile. We support the right of farmers to plant seed derived from proprietary organisms on  
12. their own land.  
13.  
14. † H. Companies owning the patent on transgenic crops must be legally responsible for damages caused  
15. by genetic trespass rather than holding farmers solely responsible for damages.  
16.  
17. ‡ I. We encourage Congress and our state legislature to regulate the biotech industry's technology  
18. agreements. Farmers should not have to sign away their fundamental right to a jury of their peers  
19. in court in exchange for the privilege of growing biotech crops. Grievances should be settled in  
20. the home state of the farmer not the state of the biotech corporation.  
21.  
22. † K J. We urge all seed dealers and grain elevators in North Dakota that handle flax to conduct tests to  
23. determine if they have Triffid contaminated stocks. We urge state and federal officials to explore  
24. effective methods to curtail the presence of GMO flax in both seed and harvested flax.  
25.

### 26. **3. FARM DATA COLLECTION AND PRIVACY**

27. We believe that data relating to our operations is important to protect and is key to our livelihoods and  
28. agricultural advancements. As a result, it is vital for producers to take a proactive stance on who is using  
29. their information, why they are using it, and how it is being used.  
30.

31. We support:

32. A. The use of contractual agreements that are concise and easy for producers to understand.  
33.  
34. B. Producers owning their own information.  
35.

36. We oppose:

37. A. The use of farm data to manipulate markets.  
38.  
39. B. Private data being used against the farmer's wishes or knowledge.  
40.  
41. C. The sharing of farm data with any business unless it is farmer approved.  
42.  
43.  
44.  
45.

1. **SECTION XI. SOCIAL POLICY AND THE FAMILY FARM**

2.  
3. National, state and local government should constantly strive to preserve and expand freedom of thought,  
4. speech, radio, television and press, freedom of secret ballot, religion, assembly, freedom to organize and to  
5. petition the government for a redress of grievances.  
6.

7. **1. CIVIL RIGHTS AND LIBERTIES**

8. A. We support equal rights for all, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age, race, creed, occupation  
9. or national origin.  
10.  
11. B. We are concerned about the constitutional amendment guaranteeing farmers the right to farm using  
12. modern farming practices. This raises questions like who defines the term modern and does this  
13. right to farm supersede local zoning authority. Because of the vagueness of the language, we are  
14. opposed to this amendment until further clarification is provided.  
15.  
16. C. We urge Congress to continue to ensure oversight of government surveillance in the United States,  
17. and to investigate violations that occur so that we do not destroy the very rights and freedoms that  
18. have made our nation great.  
19.

20. **2. IMMIGRATION**

21. A. We must be able to secure our borders.  
22.  
23. B. Immigrants are part of both our rural and urban communities. We must adapt to this reality and  
24. recognize the critical role immigration has played in our nation's history.  
25.  
26. C. Policies must provide a reasonable path to citizenship for those who are here illegally, and are of  
27. good character, pay taxes, and are committed to become members of our society.  
28.  
29. D. We encourage people to seek permanent residence legally by applying for citizenship with all the  
30. rights and responsibilities that accompany it. We also encourage programs for new citizens that  
31. foster assimilation into American society.  
32.

33. **3. GOVERNMENT REFORM**

34. We urge the following reforms in our government:  
35.

36. A. Enforcement of a code of ethics for all members of all branches of government. We support the  
37. formation of an ethics committee with oversight of the North Dakota legislature.  
38.  
39. B. The United States of America has always been special because of the rights and freedoms that  
40. our citizens enjoy. In defending our country, we should not destroy those very rights and freedoms.  
41. We therefore urge Congress to ensure further oversight of government surveillance in the United  
42. States, including information of what violations might have been committed.  
43.  
44.  
45.

1. C. We oppose term limitations because they are a limitation on the rights of citizens to choose and
2. elect their public officials.
- 3.
4. D. We support the concept of public financing of political campaigns of all federal offices. We feel
5. there is a need for campaign finance reform, starting with spending limitations. Candidates should
6. disclose all campaign contributions and they should not be able to use campaign funds for personal
7. use. We are opposed to the ruling by the United States Supreme Court that makes it possible for
8. a corporation to be considered as an “individual” in regard to campaign contributions.
- 9.
10. E. We believe political campaigns should have a time limit and candidates should be held responsible
11. for making false claims.
- 12.
13. F. Political campaigns should abide by the “do not call” list. Furthermore, this provision should roll
14. over into a “do not text” list.
- 15.
16. G. News media should be prohibited from broadcasting results of balloting until the polls are closed
17. in all districts, counties and states.
- 18.
19. H. The reapportionment of legislative districts should cross as few county lines as possible and seek
20. to retain communities of common interest within district boundaries. We support the concept of
21. one senator from each county to give geographical balance to our legislature.
- 22.
23. I. We support mandating an independent commission to determine state legislative district lines after
24. each 10 year census.
- 25.
26. J. We recommend that county commissioners be elected from specific districts.
- 27.
28. K. We support legislation to allow county commissioners to consolidate or eliminate county offices
29. only if cost savings may be realized and there is minimal negative impact on services.
- 30.
31. L. We urge that constitutional measures be simplified and presented to the voters in a clear and
32. concise manner at general elections.
- 33.
34. M. The privilege of initiated measures on the North Dakota ballot is too readily abused. We encourage
35. voters to directly address the legislature with concerns and only after that seek relief through the
36. initiated process. We further believe our state’s constitution is a document of core beliefs that
37. should only be amended for compelling reasons.
- 38.

#### 39. **4. EDUCATION**

40. Every child in our nation should have equal opportunity to obtain the most effective education that can  
41. be provided by the nation’s resources. We recognize and appreciate the quality of education provided  
42. by our rural schools.

- 43.
44. A. Free public education must remain a goal of school boards and administrators. Special fees
- 45.



1. discriminate against those who have the greatest need for the broadest educational opportunities.
2. Such charges should be borne by all citizens and not individual students.
- 3.
4. B. Our schools need to focus on their primary goal of education, therefore we urge greater emphasis
5. on classroom work, **MUSIC AND THE ARTS**, and less emphasis on athletic activities.
- 6.
7. C. We believe it is imperative that our public schools greatly improve and emphasize education in
8. civics to improve knowledge about all levels of government.
- 9.
10. D. The instruction of cooperative objectives and philosophy should be made available to all students.
- 11.
12. E. We support continuing education to train students in cooperative management at North Dakota
13. colleges and high schools.
- 14.
15. F. State funding for elementary and secondary schools should be based on at least 70 percent
16. per pupil. We oppose increased reliance on local property taxes for funding schools because it
17. discriminates against rural schools and places an unfair burden on property owners. Additional
18. financial support for educational programs, teacher salaries or teacher qualifications mandated
19. by the state or federal governments should be provided by the state and federal governments so
20. that local school districts may also preserve and expand educational programs.
- 21.
22. G. We would support legislation that will allow all school districts in North Dakota an equal opportunity
23. to participate with after-school programming.
- 24.
25. H. We support alternatives such as joint powers agreements to reduce expenses, including but not
26. limited to, the sharing of administration, programs, teachers and communications technology. We
27. also support cooperating or consolidating school districts if it ensures a higher-quality education
28. and/or becomes economically necessary. Institutions of higher education should be eligible to be
29. members of joint powers agreements.
- 30.
31. I. School districts must provide transportation at no cost to rural school patrons through state funding
32. of school busing expenses.
- 33.
34. J. Special consideration needs to be given to the length of school bus rides.
- 35.
36. K. We would support a bill that appropriates the money earned from the leases of land owned by the
37. State of North Dakota to be directed to the school districts which are in the boundaries of such
38. leased land.
- 39.
40. L. We believe that local school boards should determine when to start public school according to the
41. best interest of the students' education.
- 42.
43. M. In school dissolutions and annexation hearings, we ask that all property owners wishes be considered.
44. We believe that the future of rural schools should be determined locally.
- 45.

1. N. We urge the ND Legislature to amend the law requiring schools to make up all time lost. The current
2. law puts children and staff at risk, since schools are less likely to start classes late or dismiss
3. early on storm days. We support legislation that would allow local school boards the authority to
4. count two-thirds of a day as a full day on six occasions a year for school improvement plan work,
5. professional staff development, or emergencies deemed necessary by the local school board.
- 6.
7. O. We urge our local school boards and administration to implement crisis planning and safe schools
8. training for their schools.
- 9.
10. P. We support adequate funding for North Dakota higher education.
- 11.
12. Q. All of the state's academic institutions should be administered to allow complete flexibility on student
13. programs with all credits transferable.
- 14.
15. R. We urge continuation and expansion of low interest student loans and other types of financial
16. assistance for college students. Eligibility for financial assistance should be based on earnings.
- 17.
18. S. We urge the NDFU Board of Governors and NDFU Board of Directors to explore the feasibility of
19. sponsoring an agricultural program in our schools in the form of a lyceum and other forms of ag
20. education.
- 21.
22. T. We urge the North Dakota Legislature to provide funding for at least five students to complete
23. veterinarian school. Those receiving these funds must return to North Dakota and be a practicing
24. large animal veterinarian for a minimum of three years.
- 25.
26. U. NDFU urges the state of North Dakota to stop imputing oil and gas tax money received by oil
27. impacted schools.
- 28.
29. V. We urge the creation of a state program that provides the full or partial reimbursement of education
30. costs or student loans to in-state students who graduated from an in-state university, whom upon
31. graduation remain living and working in North Dakota for at least five years.
- 32.
33. W. With the teacher shortages and many courses unavailable to rural schools, we support the use of
34. online education in North Dakota.
- 35.

## 36. **5. HEALTH**

37. A. An affordable, comprehensive health plan should be developed that will enable all citizens to
38. become fully participating members of medical, mental, dental, hospitalization, long term care and
39. prescription drug benefits.
- 40.
41. B. We support current and future initiatives to provide reimbursement for the full cost of providing
42. rural health care.
- 43.
44. C. We encourage North Dakota Farmers Union to begin studying the establishment of a group health
- 45.

1. plan for its members to participate in and lobby for law changes that would allow membership
2. associations to offer group health insurance to its members.
- 3.
4. D. Long-range planning for health facilities and services must be continued and funded to prevent
5. costly duplication, to ensure availability of health care, to monitor costs and to give the consumer
6. a voice in the health care system.
- 7.
8. E. We encourage our congressional delegation to improve the medication coverage in Medicare Part D.
- 9.
10. F. Private-pay residents of nursing homes and health care facilities should pay no more than the
11. same rates as those who receive public assistance.
- 12.
13. G. To guard the future good health and wellness of Americans and to realize cost savings, long-term
14. and planning must assure that:
- 15.
16. (1) Health promotion and education is given high priority because lifestyle choices and wellness
17. are directly connected.
- 18.
19. (2) Third party reimbursement may be charged for services provided by any health professional,
20. including registered nurses, nurse practitioners and physician's assistants to allow improved
21. access to home health care, health promotion and health maintenance. This reimbursement
22. may also be provided for resident care givers.
- 23.
24. (3) New uses must be created for those facilities that are not needed or that cannot financially
25. keep up with today's technological demands.
- 26.
27. I. Emergency Services
- 28.
29. (1) Emergency services, training and equipment must be funded. Our rural communities depend
30. on volunteers who need continuing education and support. The state should allow Rapid
31. Response Units to transport individuals in need of care to medical centers.
- 32.
33. (2) We urge North Dakota to develop a volunteer emergency personnel compensation and a
34. retirement plan.
- 35.
36. (3) We urge the state legislature to restore liability coverage if emergency personnel are injured
37. while on a call.
- 38.
39. (4) We support permanent funding for ground and air ambulance services in North Dakota.
- 40.
41. (5) North Dakota should standardize its 911 address system.
- 42.
43. J. We support establishment of nonprofit member-controlled health maintenance organizations
44. (HMOs) and other health cooperatives to serve rural and urban areas in North Dakota.
- 45.

1. K. We urge adequate state funding of CHIP (Children’s Health Insurance Program), and we urge the
2. state to maintain minimum eligibility to 220% of poverty level.
- 3.
4. L. We support allowing any North Dakota resident to buy into the state health insurance program
5. (ND PERS).
- 6.
7. M. We support efforts to provide smoke and vape-free establishments.
- 8.
9. N. We urge that a portion of the tobacco settlement be used in prevention of tobacco use and health-
10. related issues.
- 11.
12. O. We support the teaching of CPR and first aid in grade schools and high schools for students and
13. adults.
- 14.
15. P. We support provisions by the federal and/or state departments for radon testing and water well
16. testing for toxic chemicals.
- 17.
18. Q. We support the licensing of hospices with some flexibility in the law so hospices can be a service
19. in rural areas. Likewise, we encourage our membership to promote hospice care as an end-of-life
20. alternative and to financially support hospice care in their communities.
- 21.
22. R. Since North Dakota Blue Cross/Blue Shield has been granted the right to become a nonprofit mutual
23. insurance company, we should monitor any legislation that may be introduced that would enable
24. them to change their status from a nonprofit mutual company to a for-profit mutual company or a
25. stock company.
- 26.
27. S. We urge Congress to fully fund out-patient clinics and hospitals for veterans.
- 28.
29. T. We urge the State and National Farmers Union to lobby for methods of payment that will ensure
30. adequate vaccination coverage for our children.
- 31.
32. U. We support the state approving the use of marijuana for medical and medical research purposes
33. only. ~~If approved~~, we strongly support that it is extensively researched, so that during production
34. it is determined to be as safely produced for the patient as possible. This includes research on
35. everything from the growing stage to consumption phase, and all to be controlled, monitored and
36. regulated by the state.
- 37.

## 38. **6. DAY CARE CENTERS**

39. A. We support funding of programs to enable day care centers to achieve and maintain affordable
40. rates, in addition to ensuring a safe and healthy environment.
- 41.
42. B. We support legislation that addresses the day care shortage in our state. Further, we support
43. programs and legislation aimed at reducing day care costs.
- 44.
- 45.

1. **7. NATIONAL AND STATE PROGRAMS FOR ELDERLY AND LOW INCOME PERSONS**
2. A. We urge Congress to make funds available to provide jobs for elderly low income persons in
3. worthwhile and well accepted programs and senior community service projects. We would further
4. urge the Legislature of North Dakota to enact legislation that creates a similar program on a state
5. level to supplement the federal programs.
- 6.
7. B. We oppose borrowing from Social Security and Medicare funds for other purposes. Until this practice
8. stops, we believe any money borrowed from these funds for general fund purposes should be
9. replaced with general fund dollars. There should not be an increase in Social Security or Medicare
10. taxes or a reduction in benefits to replace this money.
- 11.
12. C. We urge a continuation of the efforts to correct an inequity in Social Security benefits for recipients
13. born during the notch years which results in reduced entitlements for basically the same level of
14. contributions.
- 15.
16. D. We oppose allowing individuals to invest a portion of their Social Security taxes in private investments.
- 17.
18. E. We urge Congress to change Social Security eligibility requirements so that individuals who haven't
19. worked outside the home long enough qualify for benefits.
- 20.
21. F. We urge Congress to change the amount of Social Security benefits individuals should receive in
22. the case of death or disability of a spouse to the maximum amount they are entitled to plus half of
23. their spouse's benefit.
- 24.
25. G. We urge Congress to change laws so that spouses who are equal business partners are able to
26. collect equally on the Social Security tax that was paid in as a result of that business.
- 27.
28. H. We urge Congress to remove the salary cap on the Social Security tax for wages earned.
- 29.
30. I. We urge effective cost controls for Medicare and Medicaid, however, we oppose stringent requirements
31. which pre-determine the health services a patient may receive.
- 32.
33. J. Programs such as the Work Incentive Program need greater emphasis and funding in this nation's
34. social service efforts to assist families to move out of the poverty and public assistance cycle.
- 35.
36. K. We support continued funding for the North Dakota Displaced Homemaker Program.
- 37.
38. L. We support the current heating assistance program for low income and elderly persons.
- 39.

40. **8. NUTRITION**

41. A. We urge continuation of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the free and
42. reduced cost school lunch program for all eligible students.
- 43.
- 44.
- 45.

1. B. We support the free milk program in our school systems. We encourage the continued availability
2. of flavored milk in our school systems.
- 3.
4. C. We encourage educational programs to promote wholesome diets consisting of cereal, meat, dairy,
5. fruits and vegetables and other agricultural products.
- 6.
7. D. NDFU encourages the state Legislature and Congress to work toward federal, state and local
8. policies to bring wholesome, fresh, local foods into schools and develop processing and distribution
9. capacity to meet that need.
- 10.
11. E. We urge the expansion of USDA commodity distribution programs, to improve school and other
12. nutritional programs.
- 13.
14. F. We support the use of American products in state institutions.
- 15.
16. G. We support the Meals-on-Wheels program.
- 17.

18. **9. LABOR RELATIONS**

19. A. The rights of all employees to organize and bargain collectively should be protected. We support
20. the Equal Employment Opportunity Act. We urge amending the Taft-Hartley Act to improve the
21. negotiating process to protect the interests of farmers in prolonged disruptions in the grain marketing
22. and transportation system.
- 23.
24. B. We support a reasonable minimum wage for labor.
- 25.
26. C. The North Dakota Farmers Union is opposed to and requests the elimination of the Multiemployer
27. Pension Reform Act of 2014 (MPRA) in HB 83, which was called the Kline-Miller amendment.
- 28.

29. **10. SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

30. A. We support the task force on drug trafficking and human trafficking to work with law enforcement
31. agencies in every North Dakota county and city. The state of North Dakota should pay the costs
32. of prosecuting cases since this is a statewide concern and limited local resources slow or stop
33. enforcement.
- 34.
35. B. We urge that a portion of the profits from gambling be set aside to combat addiction and other
36. social problems.
- 37.
38. C. We support a national registry and a strict monitoring program for sexual offenders.
- 39.
40. D. We oppose legalization of internet gambling in the state of North Dakota.
- 41.

42. **11. PROPERTY ABUSE**

43. A. Due to the abuse of public and private property by vandalism and trespassing, we recommend
44. punishment and penalties for such crimes to include full restitution of damages.
- 45.

1. **12. U.S. POSTAL SERVICE**

2. A. Because we are losing farm population, the U.S. Postal Service is reducing service, both in route  
3. cuts and post office business hours, in rural areas. We urge the U.S. Postal Service to provide  
4. equal service to those remaining rural residents. We encourage the Postal Service not to determine  
5. mail routes based on population or mileage.  
6.  
7. B. We request that Congress correct the difficult situation they have imposed on the United States  
8. Post Office when they required excessive advance funding of pension funds.  
9.

10. **13. NORTH DAKOTA HERITAGE**

11. We support the work of the State Historical Society of North Dakota Foundation and its objectives of  
12. promoting and improving the North Dakota Heritage Center and preservation of history across the state.  
13.

14. **14. FLAG ETIQUETTE**

15. We urge the proper display and respect of the United States flag, the state flag of North Dakota, and  
16. support the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance as currently written in our school systems. We also  
17. support the performing of the National Anthem at public events.  
18.

19. **15. THE WORLD WE LIVE IN**

20. A. The United States has a responsibility as a world leader to continue support for the United Nations  
21. and its specialized agencies for the development of coordinated programs to expand and strengthen  
22. the economies of the nations of the world.  
23.  
24. B. The goals of our nation's foreign policy and the United Nations should be to promote the attainment  
25. of human rights and aspirations, the recognition of the rights of self-determination, the elimination of  
26. cultural barriers that interfere with the free flow of information, ideas and persons, and the sharing  
27. of technical and economic aid.  
28.  
29. C. We call upon our government to exhaust every channel through the United Nations to reach peaceful  
30. solutions to international problems.  
31.  
32. D. We strongly urge participation in and recognition of World Food Day established as an annual  
33. event through the United Nations.  
34.  
35. E. We acknowledge the burdens, dangers, and sacrifices of America's military personnel and appreciate  
36. their service to our country.  
37.  
38. F. We support efforts to establish a mutually verifiable international freeze on the development and  
39. production of nuclear weapons and on new weapons systems.  
40.  
41. G. We support foreign aid programs of food aid, and urge that such aid be done in ways that do not  
42. damage the livelihood of third world farmers.  
43.  
44. H. We deplore the exploitation of children and support labor laws which protect children's rights.  
45.



1. **SECTION XII. OUR FAMILY FARM ORGANIZATION**

2.  
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7.  
8.

North Dakota Farmers Union, guided by the principles of cooperation, legislation and education, is an organization committed to the prosperity of family farms and rural communities. Toward that end, North Dakota Farmers Union provides educational and informational services, provides a channel through which the right to petition government may be exercised, and assists its members in the procurement of products and services necessary for the operation of their farm businesses.

9. **1. FARMERS UNION ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE**

10. A. To remain a strong and effective organization of rural people, local and county officers should work  
11. harder to provide:

- 12. (1) Quality local and county meetings.
- 13. (2) Regular planning meetings of their officers to effectively implement the many programs of our  
14. organization.
- 15. (3) An opportunity for greater youth and young adult participation in local meetings and other  
16. Farmers Union functions.
- 17. (4) Encouragement to young farm families to attend and to take an active part in the guidance  
18. and direction of the local, county, state and national Farmers Union organizations.
- 19. (5) Notices of meetings to every member and invitations to managers, directors and employees  
20. of area cooperatives to attend local meetings and county and state conventions.
- 21. (6) Information to the North Dakota Union Farmer and area newspapers as to local activities to  
22. promote greater interest in North Dakota Farmers Union and its activities.

23. **2. FARMERS UNION EDUCATION PROGRAM**

24. Farmers Union should continue to improve its program of education through:

25. A. Cooperative Education  
26. We call upon our organization to continue to be the leader and primary source of cooperative  
27. education for our state. Special emphasis should be given to promote understanding of the Rochdale  
28. principles of cooperation as well as the structure and operation of co-ops.

29. B. Junior and Senior Youth Education Program  
30. The junior and senior youth program goals should be stressed and continued for the education of  
31. our young in cooperatives, in government, in agriculture and our organizational objectives. We urge  
32. that youth and volunteer leaders attend teacher training and leadership workshops, and continue  
33. to teach the grassroots principles of Farmers Union.

- 34. (1) NDFU should continue to work with NFU to develop a curriculum for both junior and senior

35.

1. classes. The materials should allow for each state to continue to teach the history of Farmers
2. Union and agriculture in the state.
- 3.
4. C. Young Adult Education and Farmers Union Collegiate Chapters
5. The young adult education program including the NDFU Alumni Association and Farmers Union
6. Collegiate Chapters should be continued and increased. We urge more activities for young adults to
7. inform them on involvements in Farmers Union.
- 8.
9. D. Adult Education
10. Recognizing education of our membership as one of the basic purposes of our organization, we
11. encourage a continuing effort in developing resource materials for use by our local organizations
12. in conducting a vigorous adult education program paralleling our youth program. Such materials
13. should be accompanied by subject outlines on topics of current interest, concern and importance
14. to our membership.
- 15.
16. County officers are encouraged to fully utilize the services of NDFU Member Relations Specialists
17. to assist in accomplishing the objectives of our adult education program.
- 18.
19. E. Consumer Education
20. Our organization should continue consumer education programs illustrating the role of agriculture
21. in the economy, the farm portion of the USDA budget, the condition of family farmers and the actual
22. relationship between the price of food and fiber on the farm and the product on the shelf.
- 23.
24. (1) Our organization should continue consumer education programs illustrating the role of agri-
25. culture in the economy, the farm portion of the USDA budget, the condition of family farmers
26. and the actual relationship between the price of food and fiber on the farm and the product
27. on the shelf.
- 28.
29. (2) We believe in educating all ages on the importance of family farmers through a marketing
30. program, innovative education tools, food delivery systems and additional programs that help
31. family farmers capture more of the food dollar.
- 32.
- 33.
34. F. Farmers Union Insurance Education
35. We charge Farmers Union Insurances with the responsibility of educating agents and policyholders
36. with regard to coverages of their policies. The Union Farmer should be a major vehicle for such
37. insurance education.
- 38.
39. G. Young Couples' Seminars
40. We urge closer coordination of young farm couples' seminars between our organization, our
41. affiliated cooperatives and other rural organizations.
- 42.
43. H. Bus Tours
44. Educational tours through the use of NDFU buses for cooperative and legislative purposes should
45. be expanded through coordinated efforts of the county and state organizations.

1. I. Young Producer Meetings
2. We urge continuation and expansion of county-sponsored young producer meetings, fully utilizing
3. their state staff and Member Relations Specialists for these programs. Such educational programs
4. should address the present problems of farming, including marketing and financial planning.
- 5.
6. J. Beginning Farmer Outreach
7. We call upon North Dakota Farmers Union to develop and implement educational workshops for
8. beginning and prospective farmers. Such workshops should be held at selected locations around
9. the state and should include information on various state and federal programs – FSA, BND loans,
10. farm diversification grants, financial analysis and record keeping and other resources designed to
11. put a new generation on the land.
- 12.
13. K. Personal Contact
14. We urge county and local organizations to develop educational programs of personal contact and
15. recruitment.
- 16.
17. L. We urge NDFU to continue to implement a program recognizing outstanding dedication and efforts
18. in Farmers Union and the cooperative movement.
- 19.
20. M. We urge the county organizations, where financially feasible, to send nonvoting members to
21. participate in the educational activities at the state and national convention.
- 22.
23. N. We encourage NDFU to organize state disaster relief to aid rural communities hit by natural disasters.
- 24.

25. **3. MEMBER AND PEOPLE EXCHANGE**

26. We support rural-urban, national, international and farm-urban congressional exchange programs. We

27. urge North Dakota Farmers Union to continue their support and interest in exchanges among youth

28. and members and to help start such a program for locals and counties.

29.

30. **4. FARMERS UNION EDUCATION AIDS**

31. A. We recommend that local and regional cooperatives and state and county Farmers Union

32. organizations cooperate in providing college scholarships and summer employment for Farmers

33. Union youth, especially to those who plan a future in family farm agriculture and cooperatives.

34.

35. B. We encourage participation of cooperatives in training programs for young people, employees and

36. directors.

37.

38. **5. FARMER-LABOR-CONSUMER RELATIONS**

39. We strongly encourage Farmers Union state officers and directors to meet with officers, directors

40. and leaders of North Dakota labor unions; educational, church and consumer groups; and other farm

41. organizations to explore areas where joint study and action would be most productive for all of the

42. memberships of these organizations.

43.

44.

45.

1. **6. FARMERS UNION MEMBERSHIP AND PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS**

2. The purpose of membership communications and public communications, including publicity, publications,  
3. broadcast media and other communication vehicles, should achieve the following:

- 4.
5. A. To keep membership informed on Farmers Union policies, activities and all farm and public interest  
6. issues.
- 7.
8. B. To promote a better understanding of the purposes and objectives of Farmers Union cooperatives,  
9. to increase patronage and loyalty and to create closer relationships between Farmers Union and  
10. its affiliated cooperatives on all levels.
- 11.
12. C. To promote public understanding and public acceptance of Farmers Union principles and  
13. objectives.

14.

15. It is imperative that NDFU and county Farmers Union organizations seek a higher visibility of their  
16. activities through television and radio advertising and relate those activities to cooperative support.

- 17.
18. D. We, in cooperation with NFU and other state organizations, shall use appropriate technology, such  
19. as the internet, to effectively inform consumers and policymakers about educational issues such  
20. as family farms, food safety, farmer's share of the food dollar, etc. We support NFU's web site,  
21. www.nfu.org, and the NDFU web site, www.ndfu.org, and encourages advertising it to our urban  
22. neighbors and Congress.

23.

24. **7. FARMERS UNION TIES**

25. A. The affiliation of Farmers Union cooperatives and Farmers Union Insurances to the Farmers  
26. Educational and Cooperative Union of America are paramount to any other affiliation because such  
27. activities have been built by Farmers Union people as component parts of an organization of, by  
28. and for family farmers. Affiliations of Farmers Union cooperative activities with other cooperatives  
29. and associations, federations and joint undertakings are highly desirable and are recommended  
30. if they do not jeopardize ties with Farmers Union or harm any other Farmers Union cooperative.

31.

32. B. We must take a leadership role in working with other farm organizations and agriculture coalitions  
33. from the local to the national level in an effort to determine common goals so that we might speak  
34. with a unified voice for the American farmer. We ask similar leadership by our organization in  
35. developing better working relationships with global farm and cooperative organizations. We urge  
36. consideration of sponsorship of regional meetings at which farmers, business persons and other  
37. rural leaders can discuss agricultural policy directions and the future of rural America.

38.

39. **8. POLITICAL EDUCATION AND ACTION**

40. A. We believe that neither the local, county, state nor national Farmers Union organizations, nor any of  
41. their affiliates, should become involved in the endorsement of political candidates. We encourage  
42. Farmers Union to facilitate candidate forums, throughout the state, in order to better inform our  
43. members on a candidate's particular positions relating to Farmers Union's interests.

44.

45.

1. B. We recommend NDFU publish a scorecard for legislators, including their voting record and how
2. often they voted with NDFU on issues important to the organization.
- 3.
4. C. Effective action by members requires direct participation as individuals in selection of candidates in
5. primary elections, caucuses and conventions; promoting and taking part in discussions of the issues
6. and the stands of the candidates on the issues; and exerting personal influence and extending
7. financial aid, where able; and voting for candidates who support the Farmers Union program.
- 8.
9. D. We shall continue to encourage and assist its members in lobbying elected and appointed officials
10. to support Farmers Union positions.
- 11.
12. E. We encourage the creation of a "Friends of Family Farms" PAC to endorse and finance candidates
13. who strongly support NDFU values and policy. The PAC shall be funded solely through voluntary
14. donations and no funding shall be directly contributed by Farmers Union.
- 15.

16. **9. MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES**

17. A. Farmers Union members should participate in and accept leadership responsibilities for
18. civic, service and economic organizations in trade center areas in which they live. Farmers
19. Union organizations should seek opportunities to appear before town and city audiences to discuss
20. mutual problems. Town and city people within the trade area should be invited by members to
21. patronize Farmers Union affiliated service, supply and credit union cooperatives.
- 22.
23. B. Members should advocate, encourage and support neighbors to run for elected positions on their
24. co-op boards.
- 25.

26. **10. WORLD FARMERS ORGANIZATION**

27. A. Membership of National Farmers Union in the World Farmers Organization should be continued.
- 28.

29. **11. NATIONAL FARMERS UNION**

30. A. The National Farmers Union convention should be held within an organized Farmers Union state
31. no later than the first week of March.
- 32.
33. B. In order to be fully representative of operating farmers, we believe that the national program drafting
34. committee members must be working farmers. Salaried state or national Farmers Union officials
35. should not be eligible to serve on this and other national convention committees.
- 36.
37. C. We encourage National Farmers Union to sponsor a farm-urban congressional exchange to
38. bring the respective congressmen to the city and farm to see and feel the problems first-hand.
39. Communication and understanding are extremely important.
- 40.
41. D. Since the majority of people in this country are not connected to farming directly or indirectly, we
42. encourage National Farmers Union to prepare an educational program about farming to be taught
43. in every school throughout the United States.
- 44.
45. E. Continue to support the Beginning Farmer Institute.

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS & ABBREVIATIONS

**ACP** – Agricultural Conservation Program

**AFTA** – Australian Free Trade Agreement

**Animal Unit** – Standard measure based on feed requirements, used to combine various classes of livestock according to size, weight, age and use.

**APHIS** – Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture

**APUC** – Agricultural Products Utilization Commission

**Aquaculture** – The production of aquatic plants or animals in a controlled environment such as ponds, raceways, tanks or cages for all or parts of their life cycle.

**BND** – Bank of North Dakota

**BSE** – Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (mad cow disease)

**CAFE** – Corporate Average Fuel Economy standards

**CAFO** – Confined Animal Feeding Operation

**Capper-Volstead Act** – The law which allows producers to organize into cooperatives without violating antitrust laws.

**Carbon Sequestration** – The storage of carbon from the atmosphere in soil organic matter through agricultural practices such as no-till farming.

**CCC** – Commodity Credit Corporation of the U.S. Department of Agriculture; created to stabilize, support and protect farm income and prices through loans, purchases, payments and other operations

**Checkoff Program** – Research and promotion programs authorized by law and financed by assessments; the programs are paid for by specified industry members such as producers, importers and handlers.

**CHIP** – Children’s Health Insurance Program

**Clawback Provisions** – Requiring companies to repay economic development incentives if they do not follow through on promises, or if they relocate after incentives expire.

**Clean Power Plan** – A policy aimed at combating global warming by setting a national limit on carbon pollution produced from power plants. It was first proposed by EPA in June 2014. The final version of the plan was unveiled by President Obama in August 2015.

**COOL** – Country-of-origin labeling

**Cooperative Principles** –

- one member, one vote
- open membership
- competitive prices
- autonomy and independence
- concern for community
- continuous expansion
- continuing education
- patronage refund
- limited return on investment
- cooperation among cooperatives
- political and religious neutrality

**Countercyclical** – A farm program system of government payments that would activate when market prices were low and deactivate when market prices recovered.

**CPR** – Cardiopulmonary resuscitation

**CSP** – Conservation Stewardship Program

**DIAP** – Dairy Import Assessment Program

**DEA** – Drug Enforcement Agency

**DR-CAFTA** – Dominican Republic - Central American Free Trade Agreement

**ELAP** – Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees and Farm-raised Fish Program

**EPA** – Environmental Protection Agency

**EQIP** – Environmental Quality Incentives Program

**ETBE** – Ethyl tertiary butyl ether, a renewable ether which uses ethanol as a feedstock.

**Extension** – NDSU Extension Service, established in 1914, which extends education to North Dakota residents through its land-grant university in the form of lectures, institutes, tours and demonstrations.

**FCIC** – Federal Crop Insurance Corporation

**FCS** – The Farm Credit System is made up of cooperatively-owned financial institutions that finance farm and farm-related mortgages and operating loans.

**FSA** – Farm Service Agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture

**GMOs** – Genetically Modified Organism or Genetic Engineering (GMOs) are organisms produced from using techniques that alter the molecular or cell biology by means that are not possible under natural conditions or processes; genetic modification or genetic engineering includes recombinant DNA, cell fusion, micro and macro-encapsulation, gene deletion and doubling, introducing a foreign gene and gene repositioning; it does not include crop breeding, conjugation, fermentation and hybridization.

**GIPSA** – Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration

**HMO** – Health maintenance organization

**Kyoto Protocol** – An international treaty that commits countries to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, based on the premise that global warming exists and manmade carbon emissions have caused it. The treaty was adopted in Kyoto, Japan, in December 1997.

**Marketing Loan** – A loan that provides income for operating and living expenses until a producer sells their crop. The loan provides a greater opportunity for producers to market their crop at a higher price. Loan rate caps are specified in law. Repayment provisions apply when market prices drop below loan rates.

**MFN** – Most Favored Nations status gives recipient nations preferential trading relationship with U.S.

**MPC** – Milk protein concentrate



**MTBE** – Methyl tertiary butyl ether, a petroleum-based additive to gasoline to increase octane; MTBE has been discovered in many municipal water systems and is a known carcinogen.

**NAFTA** – North American Free Trade Agreement; an international trade agreement linking Mexico, the United States and Canada; enacted in November of 1993.

**NASS** – National Agricultural Statistics Service

**NDSU** – North Dakota State University

**NFU** – National Farmers Union

**NDGF** – North Dakota Game and Fish Department

**NOP** – National Organic Program

**NOSB** – National Organic Standards Board

**Notch Years** – Approximately 1917 through 1921

**NRCS** – Natural Resources Conservation Service of USDA

**PAC** – Political Action Committee

**Parity** – Equality in the present purchasing power of a unit of a product compared with its purchasing power during the period 1910-14.

**Pugh Clause** – If at the end of the primary term of a lease a portion or portions of the land herein leased is pooled or unitized with other land so as to form a pooled unit or units, operations on or production from such unit or units will maintain this lease in force only as to land included in such unit or units.

**PSC** – Public Service Commission

**REC** – Rural electric cooperative

**Retail Wheeling** – Allowing utilities to abandon current service territories and sell power in an open market to the highest bidder.

**RFS** – Renewable Fuel Standard

**RMA** – Risk Management Agency

**Rochdale Principles** – A set of ideals for the operation of cooperatives that was established by the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers in Rochdale, England, in 1844, and have formed the basis for the principles on which cooperatives around the world operate today.

**RTC** – Rural telephone cooperative

**RUS** – Rural Utilities Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture

**SBARE** – State Board of Agricultural Research and Education

**SMV** – Slow moving vehicle

**State Technical Committee** – Advisory board to NRCS that assists in developing technical guidelines necessary to implement conservation programs. Although the Committee has no implementation or enforcement authority, USDA gives strong consideration to the Committee's recommendations. The Committee is composed of representatives from soil, water, air, plant, wetland, and wildlife interests.

**Staggers Deregulation Act** – Law which regulates the rail industry.

**Sustainable** – Relating to or being a method of harvesting or using a resource so that the resource is not depleted or permanently damaged.

**T-Yield** – Transition yield based on a 10-year historical county average yield.

**Taft-Hartley Act** – A federal law that restricts the activities and power of labor unions.

**Triffid Flax** – In September 2009 it was reported that Canadian flax exports had been contaminated by a de-registered genetically modified variety, known as Triffid. Triffid had food and feed safety approval in both Canada and the U.S. However, Canadian growers and the Flax Council of Canada had raised concerns about the marketability of this variety in Europe. The variety was subsequently de-registered in 2001 and never grown commercially in Canada or the U.S. All stores of the seed were purportedly crushed or destroyed. Despite these precautions flax exports were found to contain traces of this transgenic flax variety which resulted in problems for Canada's flax growers and the industry at large, who export 70% of their product to Europe. The EU currently has a zero tolerance policy regarding GMOs.

**Territorial Integrity Act** – North Dakota legislation that prevents investor-owned utility (IOU) companies from interfering with the RECs mission of serving rural areas.

**USDA** – United States Department of Agriculture

**USFRA** – United States Farmers and Ranchers Alliance

**USFWS** – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**Vomitoxin** – A mycotoxin that may be produced in wheat and barley grain infected by Fusarium head blight or scab.

**WRP** – Wetlands Reserve Program

**WSI** – North Dakota Workforce Safety and Insurance

**WTO** – World Trade Organization; body created to handle disputes between signator nations to the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.



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