Climate change poses a threat to family farmers and ranchers. Shifting seasons, changing precipitation patterns, and more frequent and severe natural disasters expose farmers and ranchers to greater risk. At the same time, family farms and ranches can play a key role in mitigating climate change by storing carbon in soils.

North Dakota Farmers Union believes policies intended to address climate change should leverage agriculture’s potential to be part of the solution. These policies should provide incentives to support farmers and ranchers as they tackle climate challenges. We also believe public policy can play an important role in ensuring carbon markets provide fair and transparent opportunities to farmers and ranchers.

NDFU urges a comprehensive, farmer-focused approach to climate change guided by the following principles:

- State and federal conservation programs should have a stronger focus on climate-friendly practices. Carbon sequestration initiatives should not be biased toward a single practice.
- The United States Department of Agriculture should regulate carbon markets to ensure they use consistent protocols and adhere to strict levels of fairness and transparency.
- Early adopters should be rewarded for contributing to carbon sequestration.
- Renewable fuels, including ethanol, biodiesel and sustainable aviation fuels, must be a central feature of any efforts to reduce carbon emissions.
- Increased investment in public research on climate change is critical to reducing barriers for adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices.