

# 2018 Policy Statement



American Farmers & Ranchers is a general farm organization, which has been representing family farmers, ranchers and rural Americans since 1905. It is the oldest and one of the largest general farm and rural organizations in Oklahoma, with over 100,000 members.

With its broadly based farm, ranch, rural and community membership, American Farmers & Ranchers is known as the “Voice of the Family Farmer and Rural America.”

The members themselves make AFR policy. They do this through a system of annual meetings. Local and county organizations send platform recommendations to the state level for the policy committee’s review. The local and county organizations also send delegates to the annual state convention to approve the program, which guides the organization’s policies.

This policy directs the legislative action of the organization and represents the diverse and complex interests of the people of rural Oklahoma. AFR represents these issues in a non-partisan manner on a local, state and national level.

**AMERICAN FARMERS & RANCHERS**  
**2018 POLICY POSITIONS**  
*Adopted February 16, 2018*

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1 **AMERICAN FARMERS & RANCHERS**

2  
3 **PREAMBLE**

4  
5 We believe in this nation, under God, and for the great hope for eternal freedom,  
6 which it holds for humanity everywhere.

7 We re-affirm our convictions of the truth and the rightness of the ideals expressed  
8 in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States and its Bill  
9 of Rights.

10 We pray our state and national leaders place national security and the  
11 preservation of our form of government as their foremost responsibility.

12 We support prudent policy and programs that will preserve the American system  
13 of family farms. Furthermore, we encourage all commodity groups and all farmers and  
14 ranchers to cooperate in formulating solutions and promoting sustainability.

15 Under our economic and political system, the family farm system of agriculture  
16 is the most productive and efficient in the world. Since the nation's beginning, family  
17 farmers and ranchers have brought forth from the soil new wealth in abundant  
18 production of food and fiber and even today agriculture remains the number one  
19 industry.

20  
21 **PURPOSE**

22  
23 The American Farmers & Ranchers' mission is to provide effective grassroots  
24 leadership for the enhancement and protection of farmers and ranchers, so their rural  
25 communities may thrive and prosper. Guided by its educational, cooperative and  
26 legislative principles, American Farmers & Ranchers is committed to work for the  
27 advancement of the quality of life for its membership and people everywhere.

28 We are also committed to providing a continuing, safe and stable supply of high  
29 quality food and fiber for consumers.

30 We support the right of farmers and ranchers to engage in modern farming and  
31 ranching practices which shall be forever guaranteed in this state. No law shall be  
32 enacted which abridges the right of farmers and ranchers to employ agricultural  
33 technology, modern livestock production and ranching practices.

34 American Farmers & Ranchers makes a concerted effort to properly inform  
35 consumers, legislative leaders and members of Congress of the problems confronting  
36 farmers and ranchers.

37 American Farmers & Ranchers strives to make aggressive efforts at the national,  
38 state and local levels to educate farmers and the general public on the policy and issue  
39 positions of other organizations when the position will benefit family farmers, ranchers  
40 or our rural communities, and oppose those issues which would negatively impact  
41 them.

42 The role of the family agricultural producer must be that of leadership and  
43 stewardship in preserving our natural resources.

44 The farm and ranch family and its welfare, therefore, is the keystone of our  
45 policy. To ensure its continuation, we support a competitive market with fair price  
46 discovery.

47 These families have always been, and remain, the foremost stewards of this land.  
48 We have the responsibility to assure that this legacy, with its broad dispersion of land  
49 ownership, is passed on to our children and grandchildren.

1 **SPECIAL ORDERS OF BUSINESS**

2  
3  
4 **ANIMAL WELFARE**

5 We support animal welfare, as opposed to animal rights. We support scientifically sound methods  
6 of herdsmanship and the continued use of technological advancements in livestock production for  
7 American producers to efficiently supply protein to the world. We oppose any encroachment on  
8 traditional animal production practices.

9  
10 **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

11 We support a joint effort among all agriculture groups in Oklahoma to create an environment of  
12 transparency between producers and consumers, rural and urban, to maintain confidence in our  
13 products and practices.

14  
15 **AGRICULTURAL MEDIATION PROGRAM**

16 We support inclusion of guaranteed funding for the Agricultural Mediation Program in the next  
17 Farm Bill.

18  
19 **COTTON**

20 We urge USDA to designate cottonseed as an “other oilseed” for purposes of the Agriculture  
21 Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage programs.

22  
23 **EARTHQUAKES**

24 We support research to determine if there are man-made causes contributing to earthquakes.

25  
26 We support research for improved methods of energy industry wastewater disposal.

27  
28 **EDUCATION**

29 We support the Oklahoma State Legislature addressing the crisis in public education funding.

30  
31 **ENERGY**

32 We support equal taxation for all new and old, vertical and horizontal oil and gas wells and wind  
33 generation facilities in Oklahoma.

34  
35 **GOVERNMENT FUNDING**

36 We oppose continued disproportionate funding cuts to Oklahoma State University cooperative  
37 extension and research which would adversely impact all agriculture producers in the state.

38  
39 We support the appropriation of matching funds by the state to the Oklahoma Conservation  
40 Commission for flood control rehabilitation.

41  
42 We support a decrease in the constitutional requirement for revenue raising measures in the  
43 Oklahoma Legislature to 60%.

44  
45 **IMMIGRATION**

46 We support comprehensive overhaul of the federal immigration system in order to safeguard the  
47 multi-billion dollar American agriculture industry, which currently lacks a stable legal workforce.

1 **PRISONS**

2 We urge that state prison facilities be maintained to meet present and future needs, including prison  
3 population, with adequate staffing levels and competitive compensation for employees.  
4

5 **INTERNET SALES TAX**

6 We support the Oklahoma Legislature attempting to more effectively collect sales tax on internet  
7 purchases.  
8

9 **USDA STANDARDS**

10 To protect U.S. food safety standards and the availability of domestically-produced agricultural  
11 products, we oppose lowering any U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) standard to accommodate  
12 any foreign country's food and fiber import products.  
13

14 **WATER**

15 We oppose any Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposal now, or in the future, to expand  
16 jurisdiction in a federal takeover of all waters in the U.S. All necessary action should be taken to  
17 preserve the water rights of the individual citizen and prevent further usurpation of those rights.  
18

19 **WILDLIFE**

20 We support the continued authority of Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation officials  
21 to enter private lands when appropriate and necessary to carry out their duties under state law.  
22

## COMMENDATIONS

1  
2  
3  
4  
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14  
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16  
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18  
19

We commend National Farmers Union on their efforts to draw attention to and address the opioid addiction crisis in rural America.

We commend the state and federal agricultural agencies for their continuing efforts to support Oklahoma agriculture.

We commend the Oklahoma Conservation Commission for their success at removing polluted streams from the EPA 303(d) list of impaired waters.

We commend law enforcement officers and other emergency personnel including military personnel and veterans for their service. We further condemn unprovoked violence against them and support speedy adjudication and appropriate punishment for such acts.

We commend each member, officer, local and county organization who participated in the AFR policy development process which led to the policy document developed and submitted to the membership for consideration and adoption.

## COOPERATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

We support partnering with groups who embrace policies that are favorable to family agriculture and are considered pro-agriculture by the members we represent.

We support farm cooperatives and urge all farmers to support such in their locals to the fullest extent.

We encourage our members to participate in specialty commodity organizations, with respect to the commodities they grow or produce.

We support continuation of the Capper-Volstead Act of 1922 that limits each member of a cooperative to one vote, regardless of the amount of stock or membership capital the membership owns.

We reaffirm our support for rural electric cooperatives and urge Congress to provide ample insured and guaranteed loan funds to meet the needs of the rural electric cooperative system and its customers.

We strongly encourage the U.S. Congress to oppose electric deregulation.

The U.S. Congress and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) are steadfastly moving toward restructuring the electric utility industry. We believe Oklahoma decisions are best left to the state and that any restructuring of Oklahoma's electric industry should embrace the following criteria:

1. Make certain we have continued universal access to electric power.
2. Make certain safeguards are in place to protect all Oklahomans from significantly increased rates and line costs from electric restructuring.
3. All classes of customers should be treated fairly.
4. Make certain rural Oklahomans gain the benefits of "competition," while prohibiting the discriminatory aspects of "competition" that left rural Oklahomans in the dark a few decades ago.
5. Make sure revenues generated by the electric industry remain revenue-neutral to all receiving entities as much as possible.
6. Equalize the cost of distributing electric energy statewide, and
7. Make certain the environment is protected and preserved.

We urge the preference clause be continued as a means of assuring the people will benefit from the sale of electric power from the federal dams, not just a few stockholders.

We support the principle that recreation pays a share of the cost of hydropower projects.

We urge Congress, state legislators and ratemaking authorities to use their powers to protect the rights of rural cooperatives to generate their own power where they consider it best to do so.



1 We urge Congress to continue to recognize the right of cooperatives to serve defense and  
2 other installations in their service areas.

3  
4 We oppose any effort, congressional or administrative, to weaken or dispose of our rural  
5 electric cooperatives or government-owned power-generating facilities.

6  
7 We support legislation to allow water associations and rural water districts to redeem loans  
8 before a sale to outside investors.

9  
10 We continue our support for the Rural Utilities Service (RUS).

11  
12 We support the concept of cooperative wind energy projects that benefit member  
13 landowners. Such projects should remain as cooperative ventures once construction is completed  
14 without resale to other private entities.

## 15 16 17 **FAMILY LIFE AND SOCIAL ISSUES**

18  
19 We oppose any changes to our national anthem or Pledge of Allegiance.

20  
21 We urge active involvement in the effort to preserve the fundamental moral values of our  
22 society and uphold the Biblical principles upon which our nation was founded.

23  
24 We support the traditional family structure and believe that marriage is comprised of one  
25 man and one woman.

26  
27 American Farmers & Ranchers does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race,  
28 color, religion, national origin, sex/gender, age, disability or veteran status.

29  
30 We support programs promoting Christian life.

31  
32 We oppose programs or practices promoting Satanism or witchcraft, and the recognition of  
33 such as valid religions.

34  
35 We support the groups that are currently fighting to stop the spread of pornography and sales  
36 of pornographic materials in our state, along with stronger penalties for violators.

37  
38 We strongly oppose television programming, electronic games and Internet sites not suited  
39 for full-family viewing.

40  
41 We oppose Federal Communication Commission (FCC) rulings that liberalize the use of  
42 offensive, explicit or profane language and gestures on network television.

43  
44 We support the people's right for quality, free television.

45  
46 We believe that determining whether life-sustaining procedures should be withheld or  
47 withdrawn for illness, disease, injury or extreme mental deterioration (such that there is no  
48 reasonable expectation of recovering or regaining a meaningful quality of life) should be made by  
49 the attending physicians and immediate members of the family.

50  
51 We encourage the use of the "Advanced Directive" by everyone.

1 We oppose the illegal use of human body parts.

2  
3 We recommend the changing of adoption laws to make it easier for U.S. citizens to adopt  
4 babies born in the United States.

5  
6 We support continuation of the Oklahoma Agricultural Mediation Program (OAMP) and  
7 expansion of services to provide stress relief counseling for producers impacted by weather and  
8 economic disasters.

9  
10  
11 **EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS**

12  
13 We support public education.

14  
15 We strongly support leaving all agricultural education and FFA programs in comprehensive  
16 high schools.

17  
18 We strongly oppose the relocation of the Oklahoma Dept. of Career and Technology  
19 Education headquarters from Stillwater.

20  
21 We support all public education-designated revenue from ad valorem taxation remaining in  
22 the public school system and not being used for private school funding.

23  
24 We support the continued use of meat in school lunch programs.

25  
26 We support adequate school security funding assistance with the help of state or federal  
27 levels.

28  
29 We support the creation of a representative statewide education task force with stakeholders  
30 to include education, farmers, ranchers and other rural constituents to determine options which  
31 would direct funding to the classrooms and the students, increase teacher pay, including reforms,  
32 and provide a means for paying for such increases or other educational expenditures for the  
33 duration of the increase.

34  
35 In order to avoid the consolidation of power, we support the continued public election of the  
36 Oklahoma State Superintendent.

37  
38 We support the state fulfilling their obligations to teachers receiving certification as national  
39 board-certified teachers.

40  
41 We support drivers training being available for all public and private school students.

42  
43 We oppose attracting new business and industry with tax incentives which adversely affect  
44 funding for education, unless "in lieu of" provisions are available for the impacted area from the  
45 business or industry receiving incentives.

46  
47 We support one credit hour of general agriculture be included as a high school graduation  
48 requirement and a similar requirement in the curriculum at any Oklahoma land grant institution.

49  
50 Driver's license eligibility for minors should be limited to enrolled students, high school  
51 graduates or recipients of a GED.

1 We favor voluntary Bible reading and prayer in our public schools.

2  
3 School children should begin each day with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag, including  
4 the wording “under God.”

5  
6 We support education of all citizens on the proper care and protocol of the flag of the United  
7 States of America.

8  
9 Early childhood development should be a parental choice.

10  
11 We urge our members to work to eliminate textbooks used in public schools that are anti-  
12 American, anti-God and anti-family.

13  
14 We support the study of creationism as a portion of the curriculum in public schools.

15  
16 We encourage the use of more volunteer workers, such as senior citizens, parents and retired  
17 business people, in the local schools.

18  
19 We favor school boards and administrators having flexibility in rewarding teachers of  
20 excellence and discharging teachers with poor performance records, including those considered as  
21 certified staff.

22  
23 We ask the Oklahoma Legislature to pass legislation allowing local school districts to vote  
24 by super majority an incentive millage of up to five mills for the betterment of education within  
25 the school district, and that these monies be non-chargeable against existing or further school aid  
26 formulas.

27  
28 When local schools are required to provide foreign language, we propose it be state or  
29 federally funded.

30  
31 We support exercising all influence possible to avoid the use of false or misleading textbooks  
32 on animal rights and/or environmental issues.

33  
34 We support broad-based representation on the state textbook committee by a diverse group  
35 of stakeholders.

36  
37 We recognize the need for a closer active relationship between AFR and early childhood  
38 agricultural education in Oklahoma. We endorse the Ag In The Classroom project as a way to  
39 reach those students. We support building a relationship with Ag In The Classroom and promoting  
40 their services throughout our programming across the state.

41  
42 We support teaching animal welfare, as opposed to animal rights, through the “Ag in the  
43 Classroom” program and other agricultural advocacy training.

44  
45 We support educational instruction for children on nutritional values of food and balanced  
46 meal selections and further encourage connecting children with where their food is grown.

47  
48 The restrictions on daycare centers for preschoolers should not be so rigid that they prevent  
49 neighbors and/or relatives cooperatively caring for children or the rights of parents to choose  
50 daycare services.

1 We support Congress designating English as the official language of the United States and  
2 the Oklahoma Legislature designating English as our state language.

3  
4 We oppose distribution of contraceptives and abortion referrals in school health programs.

5  
6 We believe the choice of AIDS education curriculum and materials should be controlled by  
7 local school officials.

8  
9 Any mandated programs beyond the basics in the Oklahoma public schools should be fully  
10 funded by the Oklahoma Legislature.

11  
12 Rural areas of school districts should be adequately represented on all boards of education.

13  
14 The State of Oklahoma must continue to expand its educational assistance to farmers who  
15 are in financial difficulty and/or trying to establish a new career.

16  
17 We support the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program (OALP) and annual line-item  
18 funding by the Oklahoma Legislature which is combined with private sector funding.

19  
20 We respectfully request that the Oklahoma Legislature move very cautiously in funding,  
21 making sure that all funding is “fair” to rural, as well as urban school districts.

22  
23 We oppose consolidation of schools, forced or otherwise, dependent and independent, by  
24 whatever means to meet arbitrary standards. Any assessments relative to consolidation should be  
25 an equitable comparison of all relevant factors. We support voluntary consolidation and/or  
26 innovative classroom approaches, providing incentives for such consolidations come from new  
27 money.

28  
29 We oppose consolidation of schools solely based on student enrollment.

30  
31 We oppose mandated consolidation of administration.

32  
33 We support patrons’ right to vote to annex or consolidate with another school district  
34 voluntarily.

35  
36 We support cooperative initiatives by small schools to improve efficiencies.

37  
38 Small rural schools should be provided telecommunication service and cooperative programs  
39 developed to provide a curriculum that meets the requirements for high school graduation and  
40 college entrance.

41  
42 We suggest our county organizations and/or members consider assisting local school districts  
43 in purchasing distance learning equipment.

44  
45 We support state-approved core curriculum in all private schools.

46  
47 We support allowing schools to be given credit for average daily attendance of students  
48 participating in virtual learning. However, we support the number of credits counting towards  
49 graduation requirements from online instruction be totally at the discretion of the local school  
50 board. We recognize the value of online learning for schools which may not be able to provide  
51 certain advanced subjects.

1 We oppose tax credits and/or vouchers for transfer between public and/or private schools.

2  
3 We oppose state funding being sent to virtual charter schools.

4  
5 We support Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) curriculum and programs  
6 in public schools.

7  
8 We support the Oklahoma career and technical education system as one of the best in this  
9 nation for training, re-training and future employment of our youth and adults.

10  
11 We support additional recruitment efforts to maintain an available pool of agriculture  
12 education instructors to meet the demand resulting from anticipated retirements in future years.

13  
14 We support the work of, and adequate funding for, the 4-H, FFA, FCCLA and AFR youth  
15 programs. We will, therefore, actively oppose any attempt to curtail the activities of these  
16 deserving groups.

17  
18 We encourage including, as an academic requirement, entrepreneurial training for high  
19 school students, such as the skills training demonstrated in agriculture education/FFA and career  
20 and technical education programs and 4-H Clubs.

21  
22 We oppose discrimination against career and technical education toward meeting  
23 requirements of high school graduation and college entrance.

24  
25 We strongly encourage a minimum of two appointees made by the Governor to the Oklahoma  
26 Career and Technology Education Board have an agricultural background and/or career and  
27 technical education programs background.

28  
29 We support the Oklahoma Legislature fully funding mandated increases in teachers' salaries  
30 or other educational expenditures for the duration of the increase.

31  
32 We support adequate funding for research and development through land grant colleges and  
33 universities.

34  
35 We support following the constitutional requirement and state statute that a majority of the  
36 members appointed by the Governor to the Board of Regents for the Oklahoma Agricultural and  
37 Mechanical Colleges shall be farmers who are actually engaged in farming and/or livestock  
38 growing as their principal business or occupation in earning a livelihood.

39  
40 We oppose any new legislative or State Department of Education mandates without full  
41 funding for such mandates.

42  
43 We support a legislative review of the process and fees involved in public school bonds.

44  
45  
46 **CRIME**

47  
48 We support the victim's rights to be strongly protected by law at the local, state or federal  
49 level.

50  
51 We favor expediting the appeal process of convicted criminals.

1  
2 We recommend severe penalties and strict enforcement of laws governing all drivers,  
3 including juveniles under the influence of alcohol and drugs. We also recommend mandatory  
4 incarceration of transporters of illegal drugs, pending trial.

5  
6 We support changes in the juvenile justice system to provide adequate juvenile detention  
7 facilities with adequate counseling and rehabilitation programs.

8  
9 We support peaceful communities and the right to peacefully assemble. Those that breach  
10 legal standards should be appropriately punished.

11  
12 We call for greater emphasis on controlling alcohol and drug use.

13  
14 School officials and law enforcement officers in schools must be given adequate latitude to  
15 address disciplinary problems in schools.

16  
17 We encourage random drug testing of anyone responsible for the safety of others and support  
18 the crack-down on any abusive use of drugs, illegal or prescription.

19  
20 We encourage adequate funds be appropriated for the treatment and incarceration of drug  
21 users.

22  
23 Convicted narcotic dealers should be given maximum sentences with a “no parole” provision  
24 being added to the law.

25  
26 We support the county’s option to regulate the sale of liquor.

27  
28 We support the Amber and Silver Alert System.

29  
30 We support the establishment of a rural crime unit. We prefer that such a unit be under the  
31 jurisdiction of the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) in cooperation with the  
32 Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF) where applicable.

33  
34 We oppose attempts to consolidate civilian surveillance and intelligence, such as the OSBI  
35 and the FBI, under military control.

36  
37 We support the action of local, state and federal departments and agencies to combat  
38 terrorism, including any agrarian-related terrorism attack.

39  
40 Due to the threat posed by terrorists to the security and welfare of the United States, we  
41 support the actions taken through the Dept. of Homeland Security to require foreign students in  
42 the U.S. on student visas to show proof of enrollment and academic participation.

43  
44 We support increasing penalties for acts of agricultural terrorism.

45  
46 We urge support for local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.

47  
48 We support additional efforts to protect our federal borders from the growing and/or import  
49 of illegal drugs and potential terrorist activity.

50  
51 We support the use of trained dogs for drug detection.

1 We recommend that current laws be rewritten and strengthened concerning child abuse and  
2 sexual crimes against children so that children will be better protected. We favor providing law  
3 enforcement agencies with the resources needed to apprehend, prosecute and monitor sex  
4 offenders.

5  
6 Parents and minors should be held legally and financially responsible for all costs and  
7 damages incurred by a minor's criminal activities.

8  
9 We urge our members to join and/or organize their communities into neighborhood watch-  
10 type programs and cooperate with local law enforcement agencies for identification of all personal  
11 property.

12  
13 After an accident involving property damage to fences, buildings or equipment, the  
14 investigating law enforcement officer(s) should be required to notify landowners or tenants of such  
15 damage immediately after it occurs.

16  
17 The DOC should pay the county jails of Oklahoma at a rate commensurate with state  
18 incarceration costs for state offenders after judicial sentences are imposed.

19  
20 We believe the state should bear some responsibility in assisting with the operation of  
21 county jails.

22  
23 We recommend uniform and prompt sentencing for the same type of offenses and mandatory  
24 minimum sentences be provided by law for repeat offenders.

25  
26 Hardened criminals should be segregated from first time offenders and efforts should be  
27 made to rehabilitate first time offenders.

28  
29 We support legislation that would limit early release of prison inmates to those convicted of  
30 non-violent crimes only.

31  
32 We favor work programs whereby inmate labor would be used to maintain and improve  
33 public facilities, such as roads, bridges, parks, buildings and other such public property.

34  
35 More consideration should be given to restitution, rather than confinement, when the risk to  
36 the public is minimal.

37  
38 We encourage use of electronic monitoring, rather than incarceration, for non-violent  
39 offenders.

40  
41 More emphasis should be placed on the supervision of parolees.

42  
43 A jail meeting standards when built should not be in violation when new regulations or  
44 standards are issued, unless the total cost of updating is provided by the state or federal  
45 government.

46  
47 To help alleviate the ever-increasing tax burden on rural residents, we support a concept of  
48 regional, centrally-located jails, funded by the state, to serve multiple cities, towns and counties,  
49 but only when these entities and the voters wish to participate jointly.

50  
51 We support adequate funding for multiple-county rural crime task forces.

1 We support action to prevent or minimize frivolous lawsuits.

2  
3 We oppose firearms registration or any other invasion or limitation of our Second  
4 Amendment rights.

5  
6 We support protecting one's self and family with necessary force, particularly when a  
7 perpetrator intrudes upon their property.

8  
9 We favor a rehabilitation center for minor juvenile offenders and an alternative school  
10 environment for repeat offenders who constantly disrupt the classroom and cause problems.

11  
12 We support coordination of local, state and federal governments in prosecution of crimes  
13 committed with electronic media.

14  
15 We support adequate funding for ODAFF for investigating theft of livestock and other  
16 agriculture commodities, products, and increased penalties for perpetrators.

## 17 18 **SAFETY**

19  
20  
21 We encourage additional annual funding allocations for volunteer fire departments to build  
22 adequate local firefighting capacity. We oppose insurance companies/agents being the source point  
23 of collections for fire department assessments.

24  
25 We support county officials' authority to declare a burn ban during times of high fire risks  
26 and support the enforcement thereof.

27  
28 We support public funding and installation of dry fire hydrants.

29  
30 We encourage the voluntary effort of producers to put reflective tape and slow moving  
31 vehicles symbols on farm tractors and equipment.

32  
33 We support education and training efforts related to farm operations, grain storage, and all-  
34 terrain vehicle (ATV) safety.

35  
36 We support a statewide coordinated communications network system and an enhanced 9-1-  
37 1 system which would improve the efficiency of ambulance and emergency medical services in  
38 rural areas.

39  
40 We urge the state not to over-regulate rural fire departments.

41  
42 We support ATV and farm safety education efforts and encourage more of these programs.

## 43 44 **SOCIAL SECURITY AND SENIORS**

45  
46 We support a strong Social Security system.

47  
48  
49 We oppose any negative net adjustments of the current Social Security system and support  
50 adequate continued federal funding of the Social Security program.



1 We support the federal government investing Social Security funds in U.S. Treasury bills.

2  
3 The spouse or family of a deceased person should be able to keep the month's social security  
4 check in the month that the individual became deceased.

5  
6 We believe only U.S. citizens should be eligible to receive Social Security benefits, but non-  
7 citizens lawfully working with a visa or work permit should be required to pay into the Social  
8 Security system.

9  
10 We oppose any cuts in Social Security benefits and furthermore urge an increase of the death  
11 benefit to the beneficiary.

12  
13 We support the Older Americans Act. We commend the efforts of senior service programs,  
14 which serve senior citizens in Oklahoma, and further, we urge funding these programs,  
15 continuance and expansion into all counties in our state.

## 16 17 18 **HEALTH CARE**

19  
20 We support continuation of an Oklahoma State University (OSU) teaching hospital and  
21 associated osteopathic doctor training which primarily returns physicians to rural Oklahoma.

22  
23 We support providing a wide range of services to our veterans, including adequate health  
24 care in a timely manner, with close scrutiny and continued oversight of U.S. Dept. of Veterans  
25 Affairs (VA) programs by the federal government.

26  
27 We support veterans receiving healthcare at their local hospital if the care they need exists  
28 in that location.

29  
30 We support health care reform that does not disproportionately burden small, family-owned  
31 farms and businesses with additional costs.

32  
33 We support health care reform to cover all Americans with affordable and available basic  
34 health-care coverage.

35  
36 We support affordable prescription drugs for senior citizens.

37  
38 We encourage the federal government to simplify the information on and enrollment of  
39 Medicare Part D and provide more affordable coverage without gaps.

40  
41 We support the right to enroll in Medicare Part D at any given time after the age of 65 without  
42 penalty.

43  
44 We oppose funding reductions to Medicare, but support a process for establishing a means  
45 test for program eligibility.

46  
47 We support expanding qualifications to allow more people eligibility for the medical savings  
48 plan, including employees with no health plan benefits.

1 We encourage the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to continue their efforts to  
2 expand the education and training provided by regional hospitals to encompass the entire state and  
3 provide care at low cost to indigent patients as well as to train interns in rural areas.  
4

5 We support providing equal pay for equal services claims reimbursement, whether in a city  
6 or rural health care facility.  
7

8 We oppose changes in regulations which would impose unrealistic demands on rural  
9 hospitals and rural physicians, threatening survival of small hospitals and discouraging physicians  
10 from establishing or maintaining rural practices.  
11

12 We support funding of rural medical scholarship programs to encourage young doctors to  
13 practice in rural areas upon completion of their training.  
14

15 Training for emergency medical technicians should be fostered in regional areas utilizing  
16 local volunteer fire departments, hospitals, Oklahoma Career and Technology Education centers  
17 and other entities utilizing grant funds to accomplish the effort.  
18

19 We support legislation to allow 100 percent federal and state income tax credits or tax  
20 deductions for those who self-finance their health insurance and are self-employed.  
21

## 22 **TRANSPORTATION**

23 We favor the close monitoring of the proposed border-to-border superhighway projects.  
24

25 We support the reauthorization of the federal highway fund and oppose such funding being  
26 redirected to other non-roads and non-bridges projects.  
27

28 County roads and bridges should maintain a high funding priority by the Oklahoma  
29 Legislature.  
30

31 All motor vehicle excise tax should be earmarked for county roads, state highways and city  
32 streets, rather than going into the general revenue fund.  
33

34 We oppose the use of state funds and federal gas tax monies in promoting and assisting in  
35 the construction or maintenance of toll roads.  
36

37 The Oklahoma Dept. of Transportation (ODOT) should pay for repairing county roads used  
38 for detours when building or repairing state highways.  
39

40 Access roads around lakes that have been built by the state should be maintained by the state  
41 and not by the counties.  
42

43 We support new bridges being built on the original right-of-way and not off-set.  
44

45 We support ODOT being responsible for maintaining their fences along limited access  
46 highways.  
47

48 We encourage the Oklahoma Department of Transportation to work with property owners to  
49 find common sense solutions when disputes arise over highway signage regulations.  
50  
51

1 We favor a law requiring all road intersections to be cleared of weeds and brush to eliminate  
2 blind corners and thus prevent accidents.

3  
4 The Oklahoma Legislature and Governor should do everything possible to maintain railroad  
5 services and all existing transportation facilities in all of Oklahoma.

6  
7 We support legislation that would provide for adequate rail competition and oppose rate  
8 increases by railroads for agricultural products.

9  
10 We support full-contract rate disclosure, including all pertinent contract provisions.

11  
12 We support the state assisting in railroad right-of-way purchases and maintenance for rail  
13 services and the enhancement, expansion and continuation of short-lines for the continued viability  
14 of the state economy.

15  
16 We oppose state or federal regulation regarding the transportation of hazardous materials by  
17 farmers who do so in the course of their own farming operation.

18  
19 We support an agriculture exemption from federal and state regulations regarding displaying  
20 of Dept. of Transportation (DOT) numbers.

21  
22 We support the Oklahoma Highway Patrol (OHP) in their efforts to educate farmers and  
23 ranchers on current Federal Commercial Motor Carrier Safety Administration requirements.

24  
25 We support variances for natural disasters in “hours of service” regulations for drivers with  
26 CDLs with respect to restoring emergency services.

27  
28 In order to continue receiving federal transportation funds, permits for hauling loads of hay  
29 should be free and easily obtainable, since the federal government requires the State of Oklahoma  
30 to issue such permits for use on federal roads.

31  
32 We oppose federal requirements to install lighting on farm equipment that was not originally  
33 equipped with such devices.

34  
35 We encourage designating one central agency for issuing permits and enforcement of truck  
36 weights and measures.

37  
38 We support reasonable reform of federal and state transportation laws regarding increasing  
39 weights and measures when transporting farm commodities and equipment.

40  
41 We support counties receiving a portion of the revenue derived from fines levied at  
42 Oklahoma Department of Transportation weigh stations located within that county.

## 43 44 45 **CREDIT AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

46  
47 We recognize and support the value of community banks and lending institutions to rural  
48 areas and realize that the broad-based economic stress of the nation has impacted these entities.  
49 We trust that they will not be ignored for future assistance when they are negatively impacted.

1 We strongly oppose legislation which negatively impacts rural America banks and lending  
2 institutions.

3  
4 We oppose the Basel III proposal which fundamentally changes how all banks' holding  
5 companies calculate their capital ratios which impacts loan volume.

6  
7 Assistance to rural banks can be provided by allowing Federal Deposit Insurance  
8 Corporation (FDIC) tolerance in working with local bankers.

9  
10 We oppose further relaxation of the branch banking laws.

11  
12 We oppose the continuing increase of regulations on home mortgages lending and support  
13 relaxation of regulations relative to community lending for home mortgages.

14  
15 We oppose further closure and/or consolidation of existing Oklahoma Farm Service Agency  
16 (FSA) county offices, support adequate staffing commensurate with work load levels evaluated  
17 annually, and support updated technology for expediting delivery of programs.

18  
19 We oppose recall of short-term FSA farm loans until termination date.

20  
21 We support a two year extension on the 15-year limit on FSA loans until the issue can be  
22 reconsidered.

23  
24 FSA should be more adequately funded for emergency farm ownership and operating loans.

25  
26 All FSA applications and credit for farming activities should be fairly and equitably  
27 considered and acted upon in a timely manner to maintain the integrity of the program.

28  
29 We oppose the privatization of FSA loan programs.

30  
31 We support continuation of the limited resource loan program through FSA and oppose loan  
32 time limits as the only disqualifying factor.

33  
34 FSA should accomplish its original mission with emphasis on agriculture loans and provide  
35 adequate funds for both guaranteed and direct loans return to the direct loan concept.

36  
37 We support lower interest rates on agriculture loans from FSA including but not limited to  
38 socially disadvantaged and veteran programs.

39  
40 We support FSA regulations, which would give delinquent FSA borrowers additional time  
41 to complete the loan servicing documents.

42  
43 We support the amount of write downs on FSA loans to not be below current fair market  
44 value and to be determined by a minimum of three certified land appraisers using the comparative  
45 sales approach.

46  
47 We strongly support jurisdiction of the Farm Credit System (FCS) remain under the authority  
48 of the U.S. House and Senate Agriculture Committees.

49

1 We support legislation to close the exit provision of the FCS that would allow the sale,  
2 acquisition or merger to any private entity that is not a cooperative.

3  
4 We support the FCS in providing long-term, low-interest-rate loans in a timely fashion to  
5 young people who want to start farming.

6  
7 We support the continued cooperative ownership of the FCS and its status as a government  
8 sponsored enterprise. We support maintaining the Farm Credit Administration (FCA) as the FCS's  
9 independent regulator and the agency's focus on FCS safety and soundness and mission  
10 fulfillment.

11  
12 The Federal Agricultural Mortgage Corporation (Farmer MAC) could be a new source of  
13 long-term, fixed-rate credit for family farmers if properly administered. We urge Congress to  
14 review the effects of Farmer MAC on the availability of credit to borrowers whose loans would  
15 not qualify to be pooled or who would choose not to have their loan pooled.

16  
17 We urge continuance of the program authorizing matching grants to states with qualified  
18 mediation programs.

19  
20 We favor continuing the Agricultural Link Deposit Program as administered by the  
21 Oklahoma State Treasurer. The program should be limited to family farmers, as defined herein,  
22 and on the ability to repay. The program should be expanded by providing additional funds for  
23 lending.

24  
25 We encourage Oklahoma Bankers Association members to get involved with farm  
26 organizations on issues related to the farm bill.

## 27 28 29 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

30  
31 We support state legislation that enhances economic development in rural Oklahoma. We  
32 urge local and county AFR/Oklahoma Farmers Union organizations to cooperatively work with  
33 city, county and state agencies to take advantage of economic development opportunities.

34  
35 We support the continued funding of the Rural Economic Action Plan (REAP) program that  
36 provides the infusion of capital to assist small towns, rural communities and rural water districts.

37  
38 We support the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry's (ODAFF) Made in  
39 Oklahoma program.

40  
41 We ~~also~~ support any effort to expand, enhance or assist the "added value" industry in  
42 Oklahoma, including tax incentives for investors in value added agricultural incentives, and that  
43 they be transferable and minimize negative impacts to education.

44  
45 We encourage increased funding for the Oklahoma Agriculture Enhancement and  
46 Diversification Program.

47  
48 We encourage legislation that would establish a state program for investing and/or financing  
49 rural business growth within the state.

50

1 We support American Farmers & Ranchers continuing to pursue agricultural value-added  
2 venture opportunities for our membership.

3  
4 We support efforts to promote agritourism opportunities for rural Oklahomans as another  
5 means of complimenting their existing agricultural enterprises.

## 6 7 8 **FOOD PROCESSING**

9  
10 We support interstate or intrastate shipment of beverages and processed foods if the state  
11 inspections meet or exceed federal standards.

12  
13 We support increasing the funding commensurate with the increased number of inspectors  
14 needed to adequately inspect intrastate, interstate and international food.

15  
16 We support Oklahoma State University's continued efforts to secure federal grants and  
17 encourage the Oklahoma Legislature to appropriate the necessary funding for operation of the  
18 Oklahoma State University (OSU) Food and Agricultural Products Research and Technology  
19 Center (FAPC).

20  
21 We support irradiation as a means of purifying food products.

## 22 23 24 **LABOR**

25  
26 We support cities or towns of less than 25,000 population, and counties less than 60,000, be  
27 exempted from provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act. This act provides that prevailing wages be paid  
28 on any construction job where public money is involved.

29  
30 We support a common sense approach to child labor regulations and laws relative to  
31 agriculture.

## 32 33 34 **COMMUNICATIONS**

35  
36 We support agriculture advocacy initiatives and communication efforts to promote  
37 agriculture to the non-agriculture audience and to educate consumers.

38  
39 We support federally funded access to broadband communication in rural areas.

40  
41 We strongly support legislative efforts to secure access to programming at non-  
42 discriminatory rates for home satellite dish owners in rural America. The Federal Communications  
43 Commission (FCC) should give consideration to rural residents to obtain local channels by dish  
44 when the mailing address conflicts with regulations which prevent them from receiving the nearest  
45 local channel.

46  
47 We support preservation of satellite-based augmentation system (SBAS) guidance  
48 opportunities for agriculture and protection of investments made by producers in existing  
49 technologies.

50  
51 We support an agricultural exemption from FCC registration requirements.

1 We support the enforcement of the telephone solicitors no call list.  
2

3  
4 **INSURANCE**  
5

6 **A. GENERAL**  
7

8 Market conditions and competitive pricing will lead to innovation in developing solutions to  
9 problems relating to multi-peril crop insurance and mitigation. Competitive pricing and risk-based  
10 underwriting are essential to developing and maintaining a viable disaster insurance market and  
11 should be originated and enforced at the state level.  
12

13 Insurance legal liability minimum limits should be enforced and motor vehicle registration  
14 and tags pulled if they are not in compliance.  
15

16 We support the removal of the drop-down liability clause on AFR auto policies.  
17

18 We encourage all drivers to take a safe driving course in order to receive additional insurance  
19 policy discounts.  
20

21 We support delivery of insurance services by full-time, stand-alone professionals.  
22

23 We oppose mandatory workers' compensation being extended to family-size production  
24 agricultural operations and small businesses.  
25

26 We favor farmers being exempt from personal liability when using contractors and contract  
27 labor.  
28

29 We oppose frivolous lawsuits. If the court finds in favor of an insured defendant, we believe  
30 the plaintiff and/or their lawyer(s) should be made responsible for defendant's costs.  
31

32 We support legislation to strengthen and amend the current tort reform law. Injured parties  
33 should be compensated only for the actual loss incurred, plus expenses of recovery.  
34

35 Reasonable limits of liability exposure should be placed on corporate boards of directors for  
36 actions of the corporation made without their prior knowledge or consent.  
37

38 Reasonable limits of liability exposure should be placed on state, county and municipal  
39 government.  
40

41 We favor justifiable evidence of merit being presented to the court before filing a product or  
42 malpractice liability lawsuit.  
43

44 We favor the establishment of certain statutes of limitations pertaining to liability lawsuits,  
45 not to exceed five years.  
46

47 We favor legislation limiting liability of any individual to the extent of their contributory  
48 negligence.  
49

1 The AFR Mutual Insurance Company was originally established (Oklahoma Farmers Union)  
2 to serve its rural membership. We urge that, when decisions must be made regarding reduction of  
3 insurance services, preference be given to rural, over metropolitan, insureds.  
4

5 We do not discourage the use of the windmill by local/county organizations and AFR  
6 insurance agents in promotional efforts.  
7

8 We support limits on liability for permitted agritourism activities.  
9

10 We support the National Fire Protection Association Firewise Communities Program and  
11 associated educational initiatives to property owners. We encourage the participation of AFRMIC  
12 agents in the program which will result in reduced risks for company insureds.  
13  
14

## 15 **B. CROP INSURANCE/RISK MANAGEMENT**

16

17 We support development of federal crop insurance policies providing dollar-per-acre multi-  
18 peril option similar to policies that exist for single-peril type coverage such as hail.  
19

20 Multi-peril federal crop insurance programs should apply to all crops in all counties. The  
21 program should include optional coverage plans, one of which would be at least the cost of  
22 production.  
23

24 Farmers should not be penalized on their crop insurance average yield as a result of natural  
25 disasters.  
26

27 We encourage increased premium assistance for producers who purchase higher levels of  
28 coverage.  
29

30 We support private vendors handling federal crop insurance.  
31

32 We oppose mandatory federal crop insurance as a requirement for participating in price  
33 support programs.  
34

35 We oppose any new restrictions on crop insurance related to livestock grazing.  
36

37 We oppose any new insurance restrictions on broadcast wheat.  
38

39 We encourage risk management training.  
40

41 We encourage a review of current risk management regulations to complement each farm  
42 bill.  
43

44 We support crop insurance premium payments being due after average harvest dates.  
45

46 We support the continued availability of the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program  
47 (NAP) for dual-purpose crop and grazing winter crops.  
48  
49  
50  
51



## PROPERTY RIGHTS

Biological surveys, including the cataloging of plant and animal species, and water samples should not be conducted on private property without prior written consent from the landowner.

Micro-management of watersheds and streams and new user fees that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is implementing should not infringe on a producer's ability to build ponds and till soils, nor impact technical assistance to these producers by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should be restricted from writing arbitrary policies and regulations that interfere with the private rights of citizens.

We are opposed to municipalities imposing land-use restrictions outside city limits.

We are opposed to the state and federal government owning, regulating or controlling billboards.

Land acquired by condemnation under the eminent domain statutes should have a settlement value of not less than 100 percent of replacement costs for like property plus intangible damages. We support mediation in eminent domain proceedings.

All necessary action should be taken to:

1. Preserve the water rights of the individual citizen and prevent further usurpation of those rights,
2. To see that legislation is initiated and supported recognizing the rights of individuals, from which water has been taken, and
3. Reaffirm, renew and defend the concepts that water rights are property rights, and these established rights to the use of water by an individual should not be taken away without the due process of law and adequate compensation.

We oppose the use of eminent domain to acquire land believed to be the habitat of endangered species. We oppose the acquisition of large tracts being acquired by private funds for the purpose of donating or selling it to a government agency at a profit.

We support governmental financial compensation for protection of endangered habitats on private land.

The threatened species designation and critical habitat determined by U.S. Dept. of the Interior agencies (i.e. USFWS) for certain species could infringe upon the property rights of agricultural producers and other landowners. The impacting agency must produce proven scientific data indicating need, an economic impact statement and a benefit to cost ratio for the action being taken before a designation determination becomes final.

All impacted public and private entities and individuals shall be compensated from the budget of the impacting agency for actual annual losses as a result of the designation. Payments shall be annualized immediately or prior to the loss.

1 We favor legislation that limits broad condemnation authority and in particular for private  
2 business purposes.

3  
4 We oppose the use of eminent domain for the acquisition of lands for parks and recreation,  
5 and non-public utilities that are non-cooperatives.

6  
7 We oppose federal legislation that would enable the federal government to acquire land  
8 outside the normal congressional appropriations process for use as outdoor recreation and  
9 historical preservation. Congress should maintain control and oversight of such programs in the  
10 interest of all citizens.

11  
12 We urge clarification of federal and state statutes that would allow all railroad rights-of-way  
13 resulting from reversionary easements to revert back to the present property owner if abandoned.  
14 If the rights-of-way were purchased and then abandoned, the first right to purchase the property  
15 should be offered to the current owner of the tract of land from which it was originally separated.

16  
17 We support adequate funding for an agricultural land trust or foundation for the preservation  
18 of agriculture land use.

19  
20 We support further education of property owners in setting terms relative to compensation  
21 of easements or leases of surface or subsurface property rights. We further support development  
22 of model leases relative to the activity.

23  
24 We encourage the development of model contractual instruments which allow landowners  
25 to receive annual payments for compensation of damages and royalties relative to continued  
26 generation and/or transmission of energy instead of or addition to a one-time easement payment.

27  
28 We support the right of surface owners to influence what occurs on their property, including  
29 the use of third party mediation, when necessary.

30  
31 We support Oklahoma being a title insurance state without requiring abstracts.

32  
33 When change in land use is proposed, the planning body should be required to notify, by  
34 recognized notification procedures, the owners of adjacent land.

35  
36 Trespass laws should be strengthened and enforced with more extensive fines and penalties  
37 for repeat offenders and restitution for property damage should be pursued.

38  
39 Farmers and members of their immediate families (whether residing at home or not) should  
40 be permitted to fish in ponds on their own lands and to hunt on those lands during regularly posted  
41 hunting seasons, without licenses subject to special requirements.

42  
43 We oppose any act which mandatorily restricts grazing of livestock in pastures where  
44 running streams are located. We oppose requiring mandatory fencing of rivers, streams and ponds.

45  
46 We support owners of private property not being responsible or liable for any accident or  
47 injury sustained by persons entering property without permission.

48  
49 We support just compensation to farmers and ranchers who suffer economic losses as a result  
50 of any state or federal agency ruling.

51

1 We support a landowner's right to keep and maintain a private, non-commercial dumpsite  
2 for disposal of non-toxic materials.

3  
4 We support a landowner's right to store equipment and vehicles on property used for  
5 agricultural purposes without restriction.

6  
7 We support a landowner's right to burn refuse on their land when located in rural areas in  
8 compliance with state and county regulations.

9  
10 We support the development of reasonable regulations for the use of unmanned aerial  
11 vehicles, while respecting and protecting the property and privacy rights of landowners.

12  
13 We support the use of unmanned aerial vehicles for research purposes.

14  
15 We support reimbursement of legal costs incurred by an agricultural producer or agribusiness  
16 if they are a defendant in litigation involving their agriculture or agribusiness operation, if the  
17 litigation is found to be frivolous or a nuisance action.

18  
19 We support the ability for family agriculture to voluntarily contract with integrators in order  
20 to maintain their family farm operation.

## 21 22 23 **FORECLOSED LAND AND WETLANDS**

24  
25 We oppose arrangements between U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the Farm  
26 Service Agency (FSA) which allow control of foreclosed lands in FSA inventory to be transferred  
27 without public hearings or impact studies.

28  
29 We oppose acquisition of land for hiking trails and habitat for endangered species through  
30 the use of easements or other restrictions placed on deeds of foreclosed land.

31  
32 We support legislative action requiring federal land for sale with no more restrictions on the  
33 deeds than existed at time of foreclosure. Mineral rights on such foreclosed lands should be left  
34 intact and transferred to the new owner.

35  
36 We support development of a clear, common definition of wetlands to be used consistently  
37 by all state and federal agencies. The landowner must be notified prior to the classification or re-  
38 classification of his or her property. The owner of property taken as wetlands should be fairly and  
39 reasonably compensated for any loss of use. While we oppose the taking of ANY land by  
40 governmental agencies, no takings should occur without a sight inspection of the property and full  
41 opportunity for the owner to appeal agency decision.

42  
43 We propose that the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) be the lead agency in matters  
44 pertaining to wetlands.

## 45 46 47 **ENERGY**

48  
49 We encourage greater emphasis on research and development and increased government  
50 support to reduce U.S. dependency on foreign oil.

1 We encourage universities and state and federal agencies to cooperate and investigate  
2 alternative processes to produce more conservation-reliable alternatives, including biofuels,  
3 ethanol, biomass, fuel cells, wind and solar power, heat transfer and other sustainable energy  
4 sources.

5  
6 We support continuation for 640 acres or less unit spacing for an individual vertical or  
7 horizontal oil or gas well in Oklahoma.

8  
9 We support the continuation of hydraulic fracturing (fracking) as a means of extraction of  
10 energy resources.

11  
12 We urge further development in the use of compressed natural gas (CNG), ethanol blended  
13 gasoline, bio-diesel and propane as alternate motor fuels.

14  
15 We support the use of nuclear power plants as an alternative energy source and continued  
16 research and development for encapsulation methods for spent fuel.

17  
18 We support the use of wind and solar as alternative energy sources and the potential  
19 landowner leasing opportunities.

20  
21 We support local communities' ability to provide primary, supplemental or back-up power  
22 utilizing all power resources available.

23  
24 Oklahoma public utilities, municipalities and/or state-owned vehicles and school districts  
25 with several buses, should be encouraged to use Oklahoma natural gas, ethanol blended gasoline,  
26 bio-diesel and propane for fuel.

27  
28 Coal produced in Oklahoma should be permitted to be used for the generation of electricity  
29 within the state.

30  
31 We support continuing research and construction of ethanol fuel plants and oilseed extraction  
32 plants. Registration, permitting and licensing fees should be held to a minimum. We encourage  
33 streamlining the permitting process for inland energy refineries, alternative energy production, and  
34 food-grade oils.

35  
36 We support research for energy alternatives appropriate to its area and environment.

37  
38 We believe state and national legislation should provide tax incentives for exploration,  
39 development and production of sustainable energy sources, including the development of  
40 alternative fuels from our natural resources.

41  
42 We support anti-trust actions to increase competition among private industries involved in  
43 energy production.

44  
45 We favor retaining oil and gas depletion allowances.

46  
47 Intangible drilling costs should be maintained as a deductible expense, as an encouragement  
48 to potential drillers.

49  
50 We favor responsible drilling and exploration for oil and gas in the United States and its  
51 territories.

1 In the case of fuel shortages, fuel for agriculture purposes should be given top priority after  
2 domestic heating and cooling needs have been met.

3  
4 We oppose creation of federal oil and gas corporations.

5  
6 We support an oil import fee on foreign produced oil.

7  
8 We oppose the importation of refined petroleum products.

9  
10 We support legislation requiring all oil companies operating in Oklahoma to make available  
11 to the royalty owner and the Oklahoma Tax Commission an annual audit of production of gas or  
12 oil if requested from any well.

13  
14 To relieve the ad valorem burden on landowners and to support and enhance schools and  
15 local and county governments, we support the measurement and appropriate taxation of all types  
16 of energy production that leave the State of Oklahoma.

17  
18 Energy and energy related companies should be jointly and severally responsible for  
19 damages to property and for incidental expenses such as transactional costs of updating abstracts.

20  
21 AFR encourages protection of mineral owners with rights to participate and be involved and  
22 included in class action suits to protect their income. We oppose mineral owners having to opt into  
23 a lawsuit but rather support current law which considers the mineral owner automatically part of  
24 the class action lawsuit.

25  
26 All buried transmission lines should be clearly marked at frequent, visible locations showing  
27 current company contact information.

28  
29 Legislation should be enacted which provides that all easements automatically revert to the  
30 surface owner of record and be restored no later than three years after the land ceases to be used  
31 for the original intent of the easement.

32  
33 We support requiring energy producers to maintain the roads, when they cross private  
34 property to get to their lease.

35  
36 We support gas balancing (proper accounting of production). Gas being gas balanced, should  
37 be balanced in million cubic feet (MMcf).

38  
39 We support the required use of electronic meters and unannounced inspection of such  
40 metering devices on gas wells by Oklahoma Corporation Commission employees to ensure more  
41 accurate measurement and proper payment for all production.

42  
43 Verified reports and records of production maintained and indexed by the Oklahoma  
44 Corporation Commission should be available for the general public and royalty owners or their  
45 attorneys inspection.

46  
47 We propose increasing fines for inaccurate measurement and improper payment of gas and  
48 oil wells and to use the penalties to fund the monitoring program.

49

1 We oppose any effort or decision that would permit an oil company to charge the mineral  
2 owner a portion of production or transportation costs incurred in the production or sale of oil or  
3 gas.

4  
5 We support a procedure to allow a current landowner to reclaim minute mineral interests.  
6 Any monies held in escrow as unclaimed mineral proceeds should also revert back to the surface  
7 owner.

8  
9 We oppose any lending institution that forecloses on any land separating the minerals from  
10 surface when selling that property.

11  
12 When mineral leases expire on land or when a well ceases production, the lessee should be  
13 required to clear the records.

14  
15 We encourage all mineral owners participate in mineral owners' association organizations.

16  
17 We support new legislation to make forced pooling laws fair to both the mineral owner and  
18 producer. "Good faith negotiations" should be clearly defined through legislation.

19  
20 We favor the Oklahoma Corporation Commission requiring that spacing be based on  
21 characteristics of the producing zone. If acreage is forced-pooled and another formation is  
22 produced, permitting smaller spacing, that acreage pool in excess of the smaller spacing should be  
23 released from the pooling order.

24  
25 We urge continued monitoring of all legislation and activity on natural gas deregulation.

26  
27 We urge drilling companies who are issued a drilling permit be held accountable to the  
28 government agency or agencies for properly casing and cementing the hole to safe levels and  
29 violators should have their right to operate within the State of Oklahoma terminated.

30  
31 We support an Oklahoma Corporation Commission rule change requiring the removal of  
32 drilling fluids from reserve pits at the landowner's request.

33  
34 Public funds should be used as a last resort to plug all abandoned oil and gas wells that have  
35 been improperly plugged, with the abandoning company having primary liability.

36  
37 We support efforts to get oil companies to use closed pit drilling systems.

38  
39 We recommend that water discharge and other natural extractants, including mud and shale  
40 resulting from oil and gas drilling, not be classified as hazardous or toxic waste.

41  
42  
43 **ENVIRONMENT**

44  
45 We oppose the consolidation of the Oklahoma Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and  
46 the Oklahoma Water Resources Board (OWRB).

47  
48 We support a cost-share program through DEQ to assist rural Oklahomans in proper septic  
49 systems installation and updating to address water quality concerns, to existing installations.

1 We support research and testing of drilling mud used in soil farming prior to application in  
2 addition to other permitting required.

3  
4 We oppose any increases in emissions standards for agriculture unless compliance can be  
5 achieved at no net cost to the owner.

6  
7 We oppose climate change regulations until sound science conclusively determines the  
8 contributing influences. Should regulations be passed, we firmly support the inclusion of  
9 provisions that are not detrimental to agriculture.

10  
11 We support fact-based research on the possible causes and effects of climate change.

12  
13 We oppose the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposing and implementing  
14 climate control regulations as a back door method to achieving climate change in the absence of  
15 passage of federal legislation.

16  
17 We oppose international indirect land use in calculation of carbon footprints.

18  
19 We support citizens taking the lead in bringing about sound, reasonable and effective  
20 solutions to the problem of pollution and favor a cooperative and voluntary approach.

21  
22 We support efforts to limit pollution and run-off in urban developments.

23  
24 We oppose the classification of agricultural lands as “point sources” of pollution, unless  
25 scientifically proven.

26  
27 We support agriculture producers in their efforts to establish soil and water conservation  
28 practices for producing food and fiber. However, we oppose regulatory rules by EPA or DEQ  
29 dealing with non-point water quality and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) that unduly  
30 burdens agriculture and is not scientifically proven.

31  
32 We support only scientifically based water quality standards in streams or water bodies listed  
33 on EPA’s 303(d) list in determining the need for a TMDL. In addition, we favor sufficient funding  
34 for a 90 percent cost-share for best management practice implementation must be in place before  
35 any regulatory TMDL is implemented.

36  
37 We believe a landowner who has been issued a resource conservation management plan by  
38 the environmental agency with jurisdiction over non-source pollution shall be considered in  
39 compliance with the law and not polluting.

40  
41 We oppose rules by EPA dealing with air particulate matter regulation regarding production  
42 agriculture. We favor exemption for production agriculture.

43  
44 We oppose any EPA policy directive, which would mandate the testing and/or certification  
45 of farmland, unless a federal fund is established to pay necessary costs of meeting certification  
46 requirements.

47  
48 We recommend that agriculture no longer be regulated by the EPA, but solely regulated by  
49 the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA).

50

1 We support an amendment to the EPA’s authority requiring that scientific proof be provided  
2 that a situation detrimental to the public's health exists prior to exercising its administrative  
3 authority, unless deemed by local, state or national governing bodies as an emergency.  
4

5 We encourage using licensed or trained individuals to do repair on air conditioning units for  
6 machinery and vehicles used in normal operation of a farming business.  
7

8 We support exemption of on-farm fuel tanks from EPA and state agency regulation.  
9

10 Counties that adopt a “green box” program should ensure that the sites are maintained and  
11 that they do not create a public nuisance to adjoining landowners.  
12

13 We urge the Oklahoma Legislature to appropriate funds for a state solid waste disposal  
14 program administered by each county.  
15

16 We support permits being issued for any dump or landfill only if located a reasonable  
17 distance from a public school or flood plain.  
18

19 We strongly believe it is in the nation’s best interest to have a partnership of federal and state  
20 governments vested with the authority to make and carry out regulations concerning the use of any  
21 agricultural pesticides and/or herbicides.  
22

23 We support the Oklahoma beautification program for planting flowers, trees and shrubs and  
24 urge our members, local and county organizations to participate in the program.  
25

26 We favor enforcing existing laws and penalties on littering and illegal dumping on the  
27 highway and county roads and private property.  
28

29 We are in favor of continued environmental monitoring on industrial and municipal waste  
30 disposal sites.  
31

32 We strongly encourage DEQ to regulate state waste transported into the state in the same  
33 way that intrastate waste is regulated.  
34

35 We support a fee structure for imported waste that is at minimum equal to the exporting state.  
36

37 We oppose the split flow of Fayetteville, Ark., sewage into the scenic Illinois River.  
38

39 We support prohibiting any person, firm or corporation from polluting the land, ponds, lakes  
40 or streams and that those in violation restore the polluted area to original condition and be subject  
41 to punishment by appropriate fines.  
42

43 We strongly support the efforts of the Oklahoma Energy Resources Board (OERB) to clean  
44 up abandoned well sites, unused equipment and non-producing wells upon request of the  
45 landowner.  
46

47 We support restoration of land to the original condition at the request of landowners  
48 following oil, gas, mineral or electricity production and/or transmission activity.  
49

50 We support matters of mineral litigation to be considered in the local court system rather  
51 than the Oklahoma Corporation Commission.



1 We propose that just compensation be given to those individuals whose homes have been  
2 damaged or made unlivable by commercial entities.

3  
4 We propose applicants for construction of future commercial waste disposal sites should  
5 notify every surface owner within one mile of the proposed disposal site and such permit  
6 application notice should be run three times in the newspaper located closest to such sites.

7  
8 When the location of an industrial waste disposal site is considered, the adverse financial  
9 impact on the surrounding property must be considered. We oppose waste disposal wells, including  
10 those for commercial salt water or toxic chemical disposal sites, being permitted on land which  
11 overlays a major source of fresh water.

12  
13 We favor a law that would make any person or company found guilty of dumping salt water  
14 on public and private lands subject to a minimum fine of \$2,500, with a right for citizens' damage  
15 suits, except in state roadbed construction when covered by asphalt or pavement.

16  
17 A family-owned and operated confined animal and/or poultry farm should be subjected to  
18 only those anti-pollution laws enforced by the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry  
19 (ODAFF). State law and ODAFF rules on confined animal and poultry operations should not be  
20 more restrictive than federal law, rules and regulations. We encourage reasonable, yet effective,  
21 standards for protection of underground and surface water from confined animal and poultry  
22 operations. We support ODAFF maintaining the delegated authority for the EPA National  
23 Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). We support state funding for this delegated  
24 authority.

25  
26 We support incidental grazing of conservation buffer strips.

27  
28 We favor protecting landowners who purchased their property after conducting an  
29 environmental audit which found no contamination from liability from contamination later  
30 discovered.

31  
32 We support a mandatory refundable deposit placed on any recyclable beverage container.

33  
34 We encourage recycling programs and biodegradable packaging.

35  
36 We support adding agriculture tires to the state recycling program on a voluntary basis.

### 37 38 39 **TRIBAL ISSUES**

40  
41 While we acknowledge tribal sovereignty, we encourage tribes and state and local  
42 government entities to cooperate on economic development and agriculture issues.

43  
44 We support intergovernmental collaboration between local, state, federal and tribal  
45 agencies to establish practical air and water quality standards.

46  
47 We support the purchase of hunting and fishing licenses by tribal governments from the  
48 Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation to issue to tribal members.

49  
50 We support tribal governments investing in agricultural enterprises as a sustainable  
51 economic endeavor.

## WATER

1  
2  
3 Water quality tests mandated by state or federal agencies should be paid for by the agency  
4 requiring such test.

5  
6 We support the minimum flow of water should be allowed at all times from federal dams,  
7 with notice given to news media in the area affected when an excessive amount of water is to be  
8 released. The minimum flow should be based on the average flow of water in the streams before  
9 the dam was built.

10  
11 We ask that Congress define “navigable water” to mean waters that can be reasonably  
12 navigated for the movement of goods including agricultural products.

13  
14 We oppose the deletion of the word “navigable” waters from the federal Clean Water Act  
15 (CWA) which expands the taking of private property and provides additional intrusiveness.

16  
17 Currently a set gross production tax funding amount is dedicated to a water Rural Economic  
18 Assistance Program (REAP) and is divided equally between the Oklahoma Water Resources Board  
19 (OWRB), the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation  
20 Dept. for water related initiatives. We strongly support the continuation of this effort and lifting  
21 the cap on this fund and making it a permanent dedicated revenue source.

22  
23 State water quality statutes affecting agricultural water use should be administered and  
24 enforced by the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF).

25  
26 We support transparency and the application of the open meetings law with respect to  
27 negotiations by the Governor, his/her designee and/or OWRB with other states, tribes,  
28 municipalities, authorities and/or individuals for the sale or transfer of ownership of Oklahoma  
29 water from the originating basin of origin.

30  
31 We support the water rights of long-term water users being protected from having their water  
32 depleted or polluted.

33  
34 We support developing and continuing local, regional comprehensive state water plans on a  
35 local, state and regional basis, and continuing regional representation on the Oklahoma Water  
36 Resources Board.

37  
38 We support mineral and groundwater rights remaining with the surface rights unless  
39 otherwise specified and noted.

40  
41 We support a complete ban on fresh underground water being used or sold for use by the  
42 permit holder of water rights for secondary oil recovery.

43  
44 We support reclaiming water utilized in energy development for reuse instead of using fresh  
45 water.

46  
47 To preserve our fresh water resources, we encourage research and development of filtration  
48 processes to utilize non-fresh water resources to be utilized in energy exploration and  
49 development.

1 We urge drilling companies, who are issued a drilling permit, be held accountable to the  
2 government agency or agencies for properly casing and cementing the hole to safe levels to prevent  
3 any possibility of contamination of drinking water. If the drilling company is found in violation,  
4 the proper government agency should be responsible for terminating their right to operate within  
5 the State of Oklahoma or drilling wells in the State of Oklahoma.

6  
7 The people in the area of a reservoir should have first priority concerning the use of the water  
8 or revenue from that water.

9  
10 We believe that the regional watershed from which water may be utilized or transferred  
11 and/or sold should receive at least a reasonable portion of any economic benefit from the sale or  
12 transfer of water out of or within the borders of the watershed through a pre-established trust fund.

13  
14 “Excess water” should be clearly defined by the OWRB.

15  
16 We support all conservation techniques in the State of Oklahoma.

17  
18 We support continued studies on underground aquifer water storage, recharge and recovery.

19  
20 We oppose the sale of Oklahoma water out-of-state without meeting the needs of the state  
21 and local area and encourage federally recognized Indian tribes to do likewise.

22  
23 We support adequate time being allowed for public scrutiny on all compacts dealing with  
24 public interest, including, but not limited to, water issues.

25  
26 We believe any sale of water across the state boundaries should be voted on by the citizens  
27 within the counties in the watershed from which water will be taken.

28  
29 We encourage a fair and equitable assessment and not a flat fee assessment relative to annual  
30 renewals of water usage.

31  
32 We support agricultural use of water from Altus-Lugert Lake.

33  
34 If a comprehensive water plan passed by the Legislature includes monitoring of wells, we  
35 support public funding for the cost of such activity.

36  
37 We support Congressional action mandating the implementation of conservation practices  
38 of municipal water consumption prior to draw-down from U.S. Army Corps of Engineer  
39 reservoirs.

#### 40 41 42 **A. RURAL WATER**

43  
44 We support the Oklahoma Rural Water Association (ORWA) in their efforts to restrict  
45 encroachment from municipal water districts into rural water districts.

46  
47 Construction of rural water and sewer systems should be expanded and more federal and  
48 state grant money should be made available for the program, proportionate to that being used by  
49 cities and municipalities.

50

1 Rural water systems should provide for future growth and the first years of repayment  
2 schedule should be at a reduced rate.

3  
4 We support programs to provide water for rural water districts, and municipal or industrial  
5 use in rural areas, provided the water rights of local landowners are protected.

6  
7 We oppose any restriction on farmers and ranchers drilling their own water wells.

8  
9 We support the concept of “dry fire hydrants” in rural areas and the Insurance Services Office  
10 (ISO) to allow appropriate fire credits.

11  
12 We support state grant funds for added fire protection through rural water districts.

13  
14 We oppose any new rules from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that add to the  
15 list of contaminants and that decrease the acceptable levels of contaminants that municipalities and  
16 rural water districts must test for, unless backed by sound science.

17  
18 We encourage county water districts and municipalities cooperation in servicing customers  
19 in annexed areas.

## 20 21 22 **TAXATION**

23  
24 Oklahoma lands acquired by the state or federal government, municipalities or by non-profit  
25 organizations, including commercial real property and farm and ranch land owned by religious  
26 institutions, should be subject to ad valorem tax, except worship centers and parsonages should  
27 remain exempt.

28  
29 We believe all fuel tax revenues should be directed to the original intended purpose of  
30 improving highways, roads and bridges.

31  
32 We oppose any fuel tax increase that would be used to offset a budget deficit.

33  
34 We oppose any fuel tax increases that are not part of a broad-based revenue package that  
35 attempts to equally tax all sectors of the state.

36  
37 We recommend legislation allowing farmers to use funds from the sale of their family farm  
38 to create a retirement fund similar to a 401K or Keogh plan. Taxes would be paid on income as it  
39 is withdrawn, rather than on a lump sum as a capital gain tax.

40  
41 We support maintaining the current capital gains tax at 15 percent or less.

42  
43 We support harmonizing state laws on combine entry from one state to another.

44  
45 We support harmonizing and reciprocating Oklahoma state law with other states’ farm tax  
46 exemptions.

47  
48 We oppose taxes being levied on stored grain.

49  
50 We oppose the imposition of any additional and/or movement of the federal motor fuel tax  
51 to achieve budget deficit reduction.

1 We support the collection of road use fuel taxes at the terminal point.

2  
3 Capital gains (now taxable income) must be eliminated for farmers and ranchers on “write-  
4 down” portion of their loans when they restructure their loans through voluntary conveyances to  
5 stay in business.

6  
7 We support the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Chapter 12 bankruptcy reorganization for  
8 farmers however the IRC must be amended to create separate tax status for the Chapter 12 estate.

9  
10 We support state tax provisions favorable to producers forced to liquidate livestock and  
11 which will not conflict with federal tax provisions.

12  
13 We support the current federal tax provisions granted by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)  
14 for producers forced to liquidate livestock.

15  
16 We support allowing a tax deduction for farmers for hay and grain donated to disaster areas.  
17 This deduction should be extended to food commodities donated to hungry and needy people.

18  
19 We support tax incentives or tax credits for producers who purchase or have purchased  
20 equipment to convert from conventional till farming to no-till or minimum till for controlling wind  
21 erosion and water conservation.

22  
23 We support providing tax credit incentives to retiring farmers who sell their agriculture  
24 operations to a young farmer to further encourage new operators to enter production agriculture.

25  
26 We oppose the federal sales tax called “value added tax.”

27  
28 Whenever land is purchased under the threat of eminent domain, capital gains taxes should  
29 not be required.

30  
31 We oppose interest rates being imputed by the IRS to individuals who sell their property and  
32 provide financing at a rate lower than the rate being charged by financial institutions. The IRS  
33 should not be permitted to charge that individual the difference between the lower rate being  
34 charged and the going rate being charged by financial institutions.

35  
36 We support a more strict definition of IRC Sec. 1031 land exchanges limiting non-taxable  
37 events to the current use of both properties and the intended use for the next five years.

38  
39 We favor taxing the money earned in the United States by any citizen of another country.

40  
41 We favor increasing the state income tax exemption to match the federal amount.

42  
43 We support a constitutional amendment providing additional millage for county  
44 governments, subject to 60 percent approval by voters of individual counties.

45  
46 We oppose replacing state income tax with increased property taxes and/or taxes on services.

47  
48 For state revenue development we support fair and equitable treatment of all resources.

49  
50 We support taxing aggregate materials when they are removed from the county where they  
51 were mined.

1 In the absence of total elimination, we recommend a federal estate tax exemption be set at  
2 \$11 million and indexed thereafter to inflation.

3  
4 We support increasing the annual gift tax exemption level.

5  
6 We strongly encourage American Farmers & Ranchers Life to educate our membership  
7 through estate planning seminars across the state.

8  
9 We request that an additional person, with an agricultural background, be placed on any ad  
10 valorem task force. This person is to be appointed by the County Assessors Association and  
11 confirmed by the Oklahoma Senate.

12  
13 We support property taxes being based on fair market value.

14  
15 We recommend use of county soil conservation maps and surveys to tax agriculture land as  
16 to its use.

17  
18 We call for an accounting to the people of Oklahoma by the Oklahoma Tax Commission  
19 and/or State Auditor of all tax revenue generated by liquor by the drink, parimutuel betting, Indian  
20 compacts and lottery tickets.

21  
22 We ask the Oklahoma Legislature to continue the present practice of assessing agricultural  
23 land based on 75 percent of rental income, 25 percent of comparable sales, to arrive at a per point  
24 value.

25  
26 We strongly support continuation of the sales tax exemption, tax credits and income tax  
27 deductions used in agriculture.

28  
29 We support a state-wide, sales tax-free weekend for consumers.

30  
31 We do not support an increase in ad valorem taxes as a means to solve a state revenue  
32 shortfall.

33  
34 We oppose all ad valorem tax increases that do not require a super-majority vote.

35 The Constitution of the State of Oklahoma should be adhered to in the use of ad valorem  
36 taxes, with oversight by the Oklahoma State Auditor and Inspector Office.

37  
38 We oppose any attempts by oil, gas and wind power companies to exempt their production  
39 equipment from tax rolls.

40  
41 We oppose the mandatory licensing of farm trailers for any purpose with the exception of  
42 commercial use.

43  
44 The Oklahoma Tax Commission should notify and clarify with businesses concerning farm  
45 items that are tax exempt.

46  
47 We support putting all road user taxes in a trust fund for the construction and maintenance  
48 of roads. The road user funds now going to other uses should be replaced, dollar for dollar, from  
49 the general fund.

50  
51 We support the return of investment tax credit on all American-made products.



1 We support the development of new authorization documents that cannot be manipulated or  
2 duplicated and include biometric identifiers. Until such a system is developed we oppose  
3 employers of guest workers to be responsible for the authenticity of guest worker documentation.  
4  
5

6 **B. POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEES (PAC's)**  
7

8 We support an opportunity to be implemented through the AFR billing process for  
9 members/policyholders to be able to make a voluntary contribution to the American Farmers &  
10 Ranchers Association Political Action Committee (PAC) to support candidates that support our  
11 policies and issues.  
12

13 We oppose the use of super PACs during the election process and find their intrusion to be  
14 detrimental.  
15

16 **C. FEDERAL**  
17

18 We support the Constitution of the United States.  
19

20 We strongly urge Congress to move forward on the construction of U.S. Army Corps of  
21 Engineers, USDA-NRCS and Bureau of Reclamation lakes and reservoirs.  
22

23 We support the continued partnership and collaboration between USDA-NRCS and USDA-  
24 FSA, but oppose the consolidation of their programs.  
25

26 We oppose any efforts to convert U.S. land descriptions to the metric system.  
27

28 The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and other government agencies should be held liable to  
29 pay attorney fees of both parties when the government loses the case.

30 We support an amendment to the U.S. Constitution requiring a balanced federal budget.  
31

32 We believe the United States should not loan money to any entity of government or a foreign  
33 power for less than that it must pay to borrow the money.  
34

35 We oppose approval of any additional federal holidays.  
36

37 We favor legislation to require disclosure of foreign ownership and control of American real  
38 estate and business firms.  
39

40 We support federal policies and programs which encourage U.S. investors to invest in  
41 America. We oppose programs such as those administered by the U.S. Agency for International  
42 Development (USAID), which provides monetary incentives for U.S.-based businesses to relocate  
43 in foreign countries.  
44

45 We oppose the placing of U.S. troops under the command of the United Nations  
46 commanders.  
47

48 We encourage reimbursement by any foreign country to the United States for assistance  
49 given. Restitution could be monetary or oil equivalency payments.  
50



1 We support legislation that clearly defines “strikes” as any work action which disrupts  
2 services performed by public employees, without regard to what it might be called, such as “slow  
3 down,” “mass resignation,” “report-in-sick,” “blue flu,” “voluntary suspension,” etc. Penalties  
4 provided by law should be mandatory and not negotiable by the government entity involved.  
5

6 We believe the bonus compensation used by the federal government should be used as an  
7 incentive and reward program for excellence instead of part of the salary package and the  
8 expectations of employees. Bonus compensation should be separate and apart from the regular  
9 salary.  
10

11 We oppose the efforts of the state and federal government to take over any part or branch of  
12 county government.  
13

14 We must have more meaningful, comprehensive campaign finance reform in the election of  
15 our state and national legislators, officials and president. We encourage further study of public  
16 campaign financing as a means of limiting the influence of large corporations, self interest groups  
17 and the wealthiest individuals.  
18

19 We believe it should be illegal for non-citizens, foreign companies and/or foreign countries  
20 to provide money for candidates for offices in the United States.  
21

22 We oppose granting congressional representation to the District of Columbia.  
23

24 We support amending the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act so that reasonable tolerances  
25 can be established for food production; and that absolute proof must be established that food and  
26 additives will not adversely affect animal and human health by its use.  
27

28 We encourage the United States Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee to utilize the  
29 abundant and thorough evidence suggesting that Americans should consume a balanced diet rich  
30 in nutrients which includes lean meats and dairy products and we encourage the increased usage  
31 of Oklahoma produced agricultural commodities in all state and federal institutions.  
32

33 We oppose the political appointments of “czars” in the White House which often have more  
34 political power than secretarial appointments which require more congressional scrutiny and  
35 confirmation. We believe such appointments should be sharply curtailed and require additional  
36 oversight by Congress.  
37

38 We support appointed federal judges being subject to congressional review and re-confirmed  
39 periodically, every six years.  
40

41 We support legislation that Congress cannot receive a salary raise to take effect during their  
42 current term of office or change their retirement status to take effect during their current term of  
43 office.  
44

45 We support retaining the present U.S. Electoral College method of electing the U.S. President  
46 and Vice-President. We oppose restricting our right to vote by limiting terms of our national  
47 legislators.  
48

49 We support a re-assessment of all retirement programs for county, state and federal  
50 employees and elected officials to assure that they are fair to both the employee and the taxpayer.  
51

1 **D. STATE**

2  
3 We support repeal of current term restrictions on state legislators.

4  
5 We support a review of the system of redistricting legislative districts.

6  
7 We oppose any move that would encourage consolidation of power, more specifically into  
8 the office of the Governor.

9  
10 We oppose the removal or transfer of inspection on any agriculture practices from the  
11 Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF) to any other state agency.

12  
13 We support adequate funding for ODAFF, Conservation Commission, Cooperative  
14 Extension Service and Agricultural Experiment Station to meet staffing requirements of day to day  
15 needs and to utilize these personnel to address catastrophic occurrences. We oppose  
16 disproportionate cuts which would adversely impact all natural resource agencies.

17  
18 We encourage legislation that prohibits the discharge of fireworks from or onto private  
19 property, without prior written permission from the landowner.

20  
21 We support legislation to simplify the probate of estates including the excessive costs of  
22 abstracting.

23  
24 We oppose the Oklahoma Attorney General's circumvention of the proper regulatory  
25 agencies relating to the investigation and litigation of potential environmental compliance.

26  
27 We support the Oklahoma Ethics Commission's efforts to affect standards of behavior which  
28 will result in more public confidence. However, to encourage public service on boards and  
29 commissions we recommend that reporting requirements be not overly intrusive.

30  
31 We support the removal of the straight party voting option on election ballots in the state of  
32 Oklahoma.

33  
34 We support a 60 percent favorable approval vote by citizens for the passage of all bond  
35 issues.

36  
37 We oppose land use planning and zoning, unless controlled at the local level by the cities  
38 and counties affected, with family farmers and ranchers adequately represented on all boards and  
39 commissions dealing with zoning, land purchase, leasing transfer, environment, health and  
40 planning in recognition of the need to preserve agriculture land in the future.

41  
42 We encourage ODAFF to serve as an intermediary for producers with export opportunities.

43  
44 The Oklahoma Legislature should be prohibited from diverting funds from various state  
45 retirement systems to fund state government, and honor existing obligations.

46  
47 We support efficiencies in all state agencies. We object to the state legislature removing  
48 money from state agency revolving funds to balance the budget; particularly, from non-  
49 appropriated state agencies whose funds are received from entities they regulate, not state tax  
50 revenue.

1 We oppose a state constitutional convention. Any amendments for the state constitution  
2 should be submitted to a vote of the people in the form of a single-issue state question.  
3

4 With respect to ballot initiatives, we support a constitutional amendment which would  
5 provide fairness to both rural and urban constituencies and require all initiative petition signature  
6 drives achieve the requisite percent as prescribed in the constitution—in each of the congressional  
7 districts as opposed to statewide—to be deemed as having sufficient signatures to be placed on the  
8 ballot for voter consideration.  
9

10 We will work to prevent and repeal excessive rules, regulations and legislation which levy  
11 rigid requirements in the name of “the public interest,” but that instead, penalize citizens or deny  
12 them needed services by such excessive regulations.  
13

14 We support the enforcement of state laws concerning the displaying and removal of  
15 campaign signs.  
16

## 17 **E. COUNTY**

18 County governments should be given a greater role in initiating environmental safeguards  
19 and in developing economic opportunities within their counties.  
20

21 State and federal funds allocated to support county and municipal governments should not  
22 be diverted to other governmental entities or programs.  
23

24 When the Oklahoma Legislature mandates additional services or expenditures by the  
25 counties, the state must provide funding.  
26

27 The reevaluation of property for tax purposes should be left as the responsibility of the county  
28 assessors.  
29

30 We support the present form of county government, with the current structure of eight elected  
31 officials per county.  
32

33 We oppose any elected state or county position being changed to an appointed position.  
34

35 We support legislation requiring proposed salaries for county officers be publicized before  
36 being finalized.  
37

38 We favor intra-county district cooperative ownership and use of county road equipment.  
39

40 We urge that travel expenses for official business of county officers and county  
41 commissioners be verified claims rather than paid by a set travel/expense allowance.  
42

## 43 **F. FEDERAL AGENCIES**

44 We recommend that government agencies’ rules and regulations be more accountable and  
45 balanced to the best interests of the people and reviewed regularly to alleviate the negative  
46 effects on small businesses.  
47

1 We support maintaining the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and the Animal and  
2 Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS) within the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA). We  
3 oppose any attempts to move these or any part of these programs to any other federal agency  
4 outside USDA.

5  
6 We oppose efforts to fragment the USDA by shifting traditional agencies to other  
7 departments.

8  
9 We support the USDA National Appeals Division as being the final decision on producer  
10 appeal cases.

## 11 12 13 **UTILITIES**

14  
15 We favor a requirement that towers 50-200 feet tall be visibly identified.

16  
17 We support the use of some form of identification, such as tracer wires, for underground  
18 utilities that cannot otherwise be easily located.

19  
20 When utility location services are required by law, there should be a finite response time.

21  
22 We favor that final authority for utility rate making remain with officials elected by the  
23 people, namely the Oklahoma Corporation Commission. But, we oppose special rate treatment by  
24 the Oklahoma Corporation Commission.

25  
26 We oppose unjustified rate increases.

27  
28 We support legislation to direct the Oklahoma Corporation Commission to regulate  
29 telephone rates for Oklahoma in such a way that intrastate rates will be no more than comparable  
30 to interstate rates.

31  
32 We oppose the sale of federally-owned hydroelectric plants that serve our cooperatives and  
33 municipalities.

## 34 35 36 **FARM POLICY**

37  
38 To establish a foundation for achieving our long-term goal of returning profitability to the  
39 family farm system of agriculture and economic stability to rural areas, we recommend that the  
40 following principles be incorporated within U.S. farm policy:

- 41
- 42 1. We oppose the use of embargoes and sanctions of agricultural goods, unless  
43 agriculture producers are properly compensated.
  - 44 2. We encourage the development of a farm program that is simplified and economically  
45 beneficial for producers.
  - 46 3. Farm programs and regulations should be finalized prior to the sowing/planting  
47 seasons of all crops.
- 48  
49  
50

- 1 4. Commodity program payments should be delivered to participating farmers in a  
2 timely fashion.  
3
- 4 5. State and county Farm Service Agency (FSA) / Natural Resources Conservation  
5 Service (NRCS) committees should be granted greater authority in determining  
6 county and district needs.  
7
- 8 6. We support retention of the present historical formula (1910-1914 base) as a yardstick  
9 for measuring farm costs and income compared to present day.  
10
- 11 7. We support the administration of farm programs through elected community and  
12 county farmer committees.  
13
- 14 8. We support adequate federal participation in funding soil and water conservation  
15 programs. Land diversion programs should not discourage long-term conservation  
16 and soil building practices.  
17
- 18 9. We support the school breakfast, lunch, farm-to-school and milk programs.  
19
- 20 10. We support use and expansion of the Office of Food for Peace (PL 480) programs  
21 with proper oversight of food commodities distributed.  
22
- 23 11. We strongly believe that all food and fiber products imported into the United States  
24 must comply with U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) quality, safety and health  
25 standards.  
26
- 27 12. We support indexing of commodity target prices to reflect cost of production and a  
28 reasonable return.  
29
- 30 13. Low interest loans and financial assistance should be available to family farmers and  
31 ranchers to help them establish viable farming and ranching operations.  
32
- 33 14. We support the farmers' right to update their proven yields and receive reflective farm  
34 program benefits based on proven yields in lieu of FSA program yields.  
35
- 36 15. We oppose payment limitations merely based on the size of the operation.  
37
- 38 16. We support future farm policy that recognizes our geographical differences and pro-  
39 vides flexibility regardless of the agriculture operation whether crops or livestock.  
40
- 41 17. We support the continuing of farm program payments to producers who graze-out  
42 their grain rather than mechanically harvest their grain.  
43
- 44 18. We support continuation of federal disaster programs for livestock and crop production.  
45
- 46 19. While we believe in traditional program payments, in lieu of these we support an en-  
47 hancement of revenue assurance and crop insurance programs which encourages part-  
48 icipation by producers.  
49

- 1 20. We support restoration of the following items without budget baseline, and if possible  
2 to be included as part of the permanent budget baseline: Small watershed rehabilita-  
3 tion; grasslands reserve program; wetlands reserve program; supplemental agricult-  
4 ural disaster assistance; livestock indemnity payments; livestock forage disaster pro-  
5 gram; emergency assistance for livestock, honeybees and farm-raised catfish; funding  
6 of pending rural development loan and grant applications; value-added agricultural  
7 market development program grants and rural micro-entrepreneur assistance program.  
8
- 9 21. We support permanent disaster authority assistance programs that provide quick and  
10 adequate compensation.  
11
- 12 22. We support enhancing, improving and strengthening crop insurance programs—  
13 without further program cuts—as a risk management tool for producers.  
14
- 15 23. We support continued funding of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), the Con-  
16 servation Stewardship Program (CSP), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Pro-  
17 gram (CREP) and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP); and cap-  
18 ping CRP at 40 million acres and restoring the crop base after contract expiration.  
19
- 20 24. We support establishment of a per acre payment on CRP which limits the payment  
21 to the fair rental value.  
22
- 23 25. Any cropland converted to grassland with a prior established crop base will have that  
24 base protected until such time that the land is restored back to cropland use, and  
25
- 26 26. In the interest of good conservation practices and not destroying residue which would  
27 encourage erosion, we support allowing producers to qualify for prevented planting  
28 for crop insurance/Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for acres in  
29 areas categorized as severe drought.  
30
- 31 27. We support Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP) contracts be allowed to qualify for  
32 livestock feed assistance in times of severe drought to reduce the grazing pressure on  
33 enrolled lands which could cause erosion.  
34
- 35 28. We support higher emphasis on NRCS technical and financial assistance for EQIP con-  
36 version to no-till and water conservation assistance, including pond clean-out and new  
37 construction, and support FSA additional resources through the Emergency Conser-  
38 vation Program for hooking up pasture taps, drilling wells, etc.  
39
- 40 29. We support delivery of cost-share programs to the local level utilizing a network of  
41 conservation districts' non-federal employees.  
42
- 43 30. We support restoration of funding for technical assistance at FSA and NRCS to help  
44 effectively implement the farm bill.  
45
- 46 31. We support programs which reward producers for how they farm, such as the CSP.

- 1  
2 32. We support cost share programs to improve irrigation systems and other methods of  
3 water conservation.  
4  
5 33. We support restoration of authority to allow producers to extend beyond 15-year direct  
6 or guaranteed loan borrowing from FSA.  
7  
8 34. We support reducing the paperwork requirements for young farmers to comply with  
9 beginning farmer and rancher development loans and grants programs.  
10  
11 35. We support the federal government using available technology to monitor crop  
12 production around the world and report both quantity and quality to American producers  
13 in a timely manner.  
14  
15 36. We support continuation of the Farm Bill Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments  
16 (SURE) program in subsequent farm bills.  
17  
18 37. We support efforts to maximize the amount of dollars appropriated in the farm bill for  
19 the purpose of farm program payments to help farmers and ranchers.

20 We oppose concentration and vertical integration that is detrimental to the family farm and  
21 ranch operation in agriculture, with the exception of producer-owned cooperatives.  
22

23 In an effort to promote homeland security and food safety, we strongly support only products  
24 “born, raised, slaughtered and processed” or “sprouted, grown, harvested and processed” in this  
25 country to be eligible to receive a U.S. label including products sold at eating establishments.  
26

27 As “family farmer” is defined in this document, we support family farms and believe that  
28 program benefits, such as FSA guaranteed and direct loans, should be directed to assist the family  
29 operator.  
30

31 Current production information should be obtained from farmer-elected county FSA  
32 committee members.  
33

34 We support programs which educate the media on the function of agriculture.  
35

36 We encourage the executive branch to make available to family farmers and ranchers any  
37 funds appropriated for intended agricultural purposes by Congress.  
38

39 We oppose the USDA selling government-held surplus commodity, which artificially  
40 depresses the price received by producers.  
41

42 We favor storage paid farmer-owned reserves not to exceed 25 percent of production.  
43

44 Individuals holding warehouse receipts or scale tickets marked for storage will have  
45 customer's priority in recovering their property when storage facilities file for bankruptcy.  
46

47 Fixed land costs should be included as a cost of production in government calculations.

1 Land owned, leased or that receives funding from by foreign governments or persons not  
2 citizens of the United States should not be eligible for any U.S. farm policy programs.

3  
4 We encourage the continued oversight of the federal school nutrition program by Congress  
5 to reduce obesity, consider the impact on local school budgets, caloric intake needs relative to  
6 student needs and participation by students.

## 7 8 9 **SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION**

10  
11 All engineering work, on family farms or family owned corporation farms, mandated by the  
12 Oklahoma Feedyard Act should be performed by Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)  
13 engineers within their respective districts.

14  
15 Final authority over required conservation practices should be vested in the local soil  
16 conservation districts and the county Farm Service Agency (FSA) committee.

17  
18 We support the continuation of a state cost-share program for soil and water conservation  
19 practices including increased funding for Eastern Red Cedar removal and invasive species control.

20  
21 We support increased education on how to obtain funds for Eastern Red Cedar removal and  
22 invasive species control.

23  
24 We support the established state fund for the purpose of matching federal funds and for state  
25 maintenance funds to be administered by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission to repair and  
26 maintain those watershed structures constructed by the conservation districts for the purpose of  
27 flood control within the boundaries of the state of Oklahoma. We support national efforts to  
28 provide rehabilitation funds for watershed structures.

29  
30 We urge continuation of soil conservation districts and FSA programs with full authority  
31 residing in the farmer-elected county and community committees.

32  
33 We support and encourage Congress to fund the small upstream flood control projects  
34 administered by NRCS.

35  
36 We oppose conservation program provisions which penalize producers for early adaption of  
37 stewardship practices.

38  
39 We ask that a conservation program be designed with sufficient incentive to retire marginal  
40 cropland from production.

41  
42 We support and encourage the continued voluntary installation of best management practices  
43 under the Clean Water Act (CWA) as it pertains to agricultural non-point sources of pollution.  
44 Reasonable conservation compliance standards should be established by the local FSA county  
45 committee and the local conservation district board based on the unique characteristics of the soils  
46 in that county.

47  
48 We oppose any and all efforts to re-direct CWA Sec. 319 funds away from the Oklahoma  
49 Conservation Commission.



1 We support any legislative efforts to solidify the position of the Oklahoma Conservation  
2 Commission as the state agency that receives and administers CWA Sec. 319 funds.  
3

4 We encourage the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation to pursue any and all action to hold  
5 the water quality work of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission, local conservation districts  
6 and the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) NRCS in Oklahoma as a potential model for all states  
7 to follow to address nonpoint source pollution through locally-led, voluntary, cooperative  
8 conservation instead of through regulations or lawsuits.  
9

## 10 **COMPETITION AND FAIR MARKETS**

11  
12  
13 We oppose non-family corporations which negatively impact production agriculture.  
14

15 We support appropriate bonding requirements to ensure clean up by out-of-state and foreign  
16 limited liability companies, corporations or partnerships, when working in Oklahoma.  
17

18 We support state nuisance laws which provide rural residents with immunity from nuisance  
19 claims for agricultural activities including marketing.  
20

21 Only the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF) should be charged with  
22 the enforcement and administration of all rules and regulations pertaining to production  
23 agriculture.  
24

25 We support legislation restricting investment and ownership or leasing of land and natural  
26 resources by foreign nations and non-citizens.  
27

28 We support poultry, swine and other contract growers in their efforts to enhance their  
29 bargaining and negotiating positions so they may negotiate fair and equitable contracts with  
30 corporate processors and integrators.  
31

## 32 **MARKETING OF AG COMMODITIES**

33  
34  
35 We favor increased farmer-operator representation on exchange boards, specifically on those  
36 committees responsible for rule-making on agricultural commodity contracts.  
37

38 We support keeping the oversight and authorization of the Commodity Futures Trade  
39 Commission (CFTC) within the U.S. House and Senate Agriculture Committees, and believe that  
40 the CFTC should:  
41

- 42 1. Guard against insider trading by individuals or firms which possess foreknowledge of  
43 significant price changes due to large market transactions;  
44
- 45 2. Ensure an adequate number of delivery points for hedging participants;  
46
- 47 3. Work in cooperation with state securities enforcement agencies to crack down on  
48 “boiler room” operations and other violations of the Commodities Exchange Act; and  
49

1 4. Monitor, with special vigilance, any market movements which indicate the deliberate  
2 accumulation of excessive speculative positions, and to exercise, when necessary, those  
3 emergency powers granted by Congress.  
4

5 Congress should investigate how the practice of short selling of commodities and futures  
6 manipulation by major national or international grain and livestock companies adversely affects  
7 the price farmers receive.  
8

9 We oppose trading organizations accessing segregated funds.  
10

11 We support sufficient bonding, federal insurance or other types of protection for persons  
12 commercially engaged in trading stocks, bonds, financial instruments, livestock or crops.  
13

14 We support the continuation of agricultural weights and measures activities by the Oklahoma  
15 Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF).  
16

## 17 **TRADE**

18  
19  
20 To facilitate the expedient delivery of commodities relative to trade opportunities we support  
21 increased attention to maintenance of the waterways infrastructure of the United States.  
22

23 We support bilateral and multi-lateral fair trade agreements, not free trade agreements, to  
24 stabilize international grain marketing and to expand agricultural exports.  
25

26 We support continuing efforts to normalize trade relations with Cuba.  
27

28 We support maintaining balanced trade with foreign countries and imposing tariffs on  
29 imports which disrupt domestic farm markets.  
30

31 U.S. trade negotiators should consider human rights issues during negotiations on  
32 international trade.  
33

34 We recognize that food and agriculture have unique characteristics that differentiate  
35 them from other sectors of the global economy. Because food is an integral part of human  
36 life, every nation should be afforded the right to establish and maintain their own domestic  
37 farm programs.  
38

39 We favor appropriate action of equal value to counter lost markets caused by tariff and non-  
40 tariff trade barriers.  
41

42 We support U.S. funding of the World Bank to the extent that it is beneficial to the U.S.  
43 economy.  
44

45 We oppose the forgiveness of any foreign debt, whether military or economic.  
46

47 We urge protection against the loss of American jobs.  
48

49 We support a proposal that all foreign aid be in the form of credits to be used to buy American  
50 goods and commodities.  
51

1 We oppose export of fertilizer and other materials necessary for agricultural productions  
2 when a definite need for these materials is evident in this country.

3  
4 We support the initiation of tariffs to ensure a stable food supply.

5  
6 We oppose importation of duty free renewable fuel.

7  
8 We oppose any reduction of duties or tariffs on agricultural products imported to the United  
9 States.

10  
11 Food safety legislation must include a substantial increase in the inspection of imported food  
12 and feed products. The cost of inspection should come from fees on imports. All imported food  
13 and feed products should be inspected.

14  
15 All beef imports should be counted under the beef import quota system and the current beef  
16 import cap should be maintained.

17  
18 We oppose the importation of products from countries that do not accept the importation of  
19 U.S. agricultural products.

20  
21 We favor increasing the per capita income limitation for countries eligible to receive aid  
22 under the Food for Peace Program (PL 480).

23  
24 When possible all U.S. military installations, government agencies and schools should be  
25 required to use only food produced by American farmers and ranchers.

26  
27 Contract sales for agriculture exports should be guaranteed.

28  
29 We support exempting agriculture from trade sanctions. If embargoes or sanctions are  
30 implemented, producers should be compensated for the loss of agricultural markets.

31  
32 We oppose the establishment of the “department of trade” as a cabinet office.

33  
34 We support the review of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and World  
35 Trade Organization (WTO) agreements However, we strongly oppose any efforts to restrict  
36 agriculture trade export efforts.

37  
38 We believe all participating countries of the NAFTA agreement should abide by U.S. safety  
39 standards for trucking when operating on U.S. highways.

40  
41 We support agriculture organization representatives be included early in the process when  
42 considering future trade agreements, when agriculture products are involved.

43  
44 We oppose the WTO and specific trade agreements having undue influence on U.S. farm  
45 policy which conflicts with the sovereignty and laws of the citizens of the United States.

46  
47 We support full congressional deliberation prior to the enactment of any trade agreement.

1 **COMMODITIES**

2  
3 We support research and promotion programs financed by mandatorily paid and voluntarily  
4 refundable deductions from the proceeds of sales by producers of agricultural commodities with  
5 disbursement of funds controlled solely by boards of domestic producers elected by those domestic  
6 producers assessed. The producer boards also solely control the operations of the programs.  
7

8 We support producing biotech commodities for a continued efficient and abundant food and  
9 fiber supply as long as food safety is ensured, barriers are not created to interrupt trade between  
10 nations or that negatively affect export possibilities for any commodity.  
11

12 We support check-off programs for imported commodities being the same as domestic  
13 commodities.  
14

15 We support all weather disasters be treated equal with respect to indemnifying producers  
16 and citizens.  
17

18 We support the retention of the basic agribusiness infrastructure critical to rural America  
19 which has been impacted by adverse weather conditions (i.e. grain elevators, livestock auctions  
20 and cotton gins).  
21

22 In order to protect agriculture producers we support the concept of indemnity funds and  
23 being actively engaged in making certain indemnity funds are sufficient and flexible to keep up  
24 with increasing market value.  
25

26 We believe the news media should utilize scientific terminology when reporting issues  
27 relevant to the agriculture industry which has the potential to impact commodity market prices to  
28 agriculture producers. For example, instead of using “swine flu,” “H1N1” should be used, or  
29 “BSE” instead of “mad cow.”  
30

31 Be it resolved that all licensing entities for in-state and out-of-state custom harvesters, and  
32 for-hire transporters of agriculture commodities and products collaborate to establish a centralized  
33 permitting process.  
34

35 We support research and development of industrialized hemp for use as fiber.  
36  
37

38 **A. WHEAT**

39  
40 We encourage Congress to initiate legislation to control price-depressing sales of  
41 government-owned wheat and the flood of price-depressing wheat imports.  
42

43 We support inspection and compensation for producers, custom harvesters and handlers to  
44 reduce losses caused by all diseases.  
45

46 No foreign materials whatsoever should be allowed to be added into wheat or feed grains for  
47 export prior to or during the loading of ships for export.  
48

49 Since grain buyers levy a discount on grain below a certain quality standard, they should also  
50 pay a premium for grain that is better than standard with both discounts and premiums posted.  
51

1 We support a coordinated effort among wheat producing countries to develop a genetically  
2 enhanced variety with adequate research to ensure food safety and consumer acceptance.

3  
4 We encourage the U.S. Wheat Associates to become more active in addressing domestic  
5 concerns.

6  
7  
8 **B. COTTON**

9  
10 Price support loan on cotton should be based on a domestic profitability concept, rather than  
11 a foreign cotton exchange. As long as the present price support level is based on the Liverpool  
12 Cotton Exchange, we ask that it be based on a six-month marketing period.

13  
14 We support continuation of the boll weevil eradication program and maintaining boll weevil-  
15 free status.

16  
17 We favor keeping the cotton gins under the Oklahoma Corporation Commission.

18  
19 We support cotton gin trash research, including fuel pelleting and cattle feed.

20  
21  
22 **C. LIVESTOCK**

23  
24 We oppose the defining of animal manure, waste or nutrients as being considered hazardous  
25 and regulated under state law or federal "Superfund" law, the Comprehensive Environmental  
26 Response Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA).

27  
28 We support reform and time reduction for record retention for all confined animal feeding  
29 operations (CAFOs).

30  
31 We support clarification of the rules on the closure of lagoons of current operating facilities  
32 and for existing non-operating facilities.

33  
34 We support continuing education requirements for CAFOs producers be on a basis of every  
35 third year.

36  
37 We support implementation of a livestock disaster program that compensates producers  
38 when imports or disease affect the reduction of price by more than 10 percent.

39  
40 We support keeping Livestock Assistance Program (LAP) in place and establishing a fund  
41 so the payment factor can be kept at 100 percent to insure timely payments.

42  
43 We support funding a cost share program to build hay barns to increase our state hay storage  
44 capacity for times of emergency such as drought and wildfires.

45  
46 We recommend enrollment in the Oklahoma State University Center for Veterinary Health  
47 Sciences (OSU-CVHS) be expanded. Preference should be given to rural Oklahoma residents.

48  
49 We support an initiative to address the shortage of state large animal practice veterinarians  
50 that focuses on financial assistance for vet school education. We additionally support a low interest  
51 loan or guaranteed loan for purchasing an existing practice or construction of a new large animal

1 clinic in rural Oklahoma. In exchange for both considerations the veterinarian will practice a  
2 specified number of years in a rural area.

3  
4 We oppose the requirement that veterinary drugs, be sold by prescription only. We support  
5 full availability of veterinary drugs to agriculture producers in order to provide adequate animal  
6 health care.

7  
8 We support retaining the option of using antibiotics in medicines or feeds for animal health  
9 preventative measures or when treating livestock that are sick, with a veterinarian's consultation.

10  
11 We support the livestock owners' personal property right to treat their own animals and/or  
12 engage veterinarians or lay people to do the same.

13  
14 We support the responsible use of scientifically proven, safe production practices in livestock  
15 and poultry.

16  
17 We strongly support enforcement of anti-trust laws currently on the books, and anti-trust  
18 laws must be strengthened and enforced to prevent the continued corporate dominance of  
19 agriculture markets including but not limited to livestock feeding operations.

20  
21 We urge more responsible enforcement of Sherman and Clayton Anti-Trust Acts.

22  
23 We support accurate and effective mandatory price reporting, reflective of actual prices of  
24 the major meat packers.

25  
26 We support programs to educate producers on animal identification methods in order to  
27 identify and assist in retrieving stolen livestock.

28  
29 We support and encourage a livestock owner's right to identify their livestock with hot iron  
30 branding, tattooing, tagging or other types of identification.

31  
32 We support the concept of a premise identification program. Any future programs dealing  
33 with animal identification should be least burdensome to producers and maintain producer  
34 confidentiality.

35  
36 We support a producer's voluntary application of technology, age verification and trace back  
37 methods which can enhance producer profits.

38  
39 We propose strengthening the cattle branding system by encouraging that the brand on  
40 branded livestock be reflected on the bill of sale in all sales transactions.

41  
42 We support legislation to require a "PI" brand on all persistently infected cattle sold at  
43 livestock markets.

44  
45 To deter livestock and rural theft, we support stronger penalties with forfeiture of assets  
46 going into a revolving fund within the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF)  
47 and support continued efforts by ODAFF to investigate livestock and rural thefts and the  
48 prosecution of offenders.

1 We encourage the leadership of the various livestock species and general farm organizations  
2 to work together to create a USDA approved established disaster plan to help protect the future of  
3 our farmers and ranchers.

4  
5 We support a mandatorily paid and voluntarily refundable check-off for lamb and wool.

6  
7 We support an adequately funded beef check-off to continue the mission of market  
8 promotion, research, nutrition, product safety and education.

9  
10 We oppose an automatic referendum on the beef-check every five years.

11  
12 We support pork and beef initiatives funded through check-off programs which educate  
13 youth and adults about these industries and products.

14  
15 We strongly oppose the re-introduction of predatory animals by any government agency.

16  
17 We strongly favor legislative or regulatory changes that will give the right to any owner to  
18 control any predatory animals when the owner and/or tenant, the owner's family or the owner's  
19 property is in danger.

20  
21 We favor competition in the marketplace; therefore, be it resolved that the following be  
22 adopted and implemented through legislation:

- 23
- 24 1. A ban on packer ownership more than 14 days prior to slaughter.
  - 25
  - 26 2. Establish provisions for transparency in the market relating to base and forward  
27 contracting, including a federal protection plan for whistleblowers and witnesses.
  - 28
  - 29 3. Clear delineation of spot markets and its functions.
  - 30
  - 31 4. Establish parameters for treble damages and recovery of attorney fees from consumers and  
32 producers.
  - 33
  - 34 5. Ensure grade transparency uniformity at state inspections.
  - 35
  - 36 6. Modernize, re-codify, and enforce the Packers and Stockyards Act to meet the standards  
37 and expectations of today's consumers and producers for their protection.
  - 38
  - 39 7. Establish and implement a country-of-origin labeling program.
  - 40
  - 41 8. Create a USDA "Office of Special Counsel for Competition" to aggressively investigate  
42 anti-competitive practices and market manipulation occurring in the agriculture sector and  
43 have the authority and subpoena power to collect concentration-related information.
  - 44

45 We demand that USDA reinstate its prohibition of ownership or control of custom feedlots  
46 by packers.

47  
48 We support the appropriate harvesting of equine in USDA inspected facilities and oppose  
49 any legislation prohibiting transportation of equine for harvest.

50  
51 We oppose a tax on methane gas released by livestock.

1 We encourage ODAFF to increase monitoring and testing for tuberculosis in livestock and  
2 other species as required.

3  
4  
5 **D. DAIRY AND DAIRY PRODUCTS**  
6

7 We support a stabilized supply of milk and milk products, at levels which will adequately  
8 meet the needs of consumers. We further support improving the level of income for dairy farmers  
9 to better meet their increased cost of production, in order to maintain a productive capacity to meet  
10 anticipated future needs. Therefore, we support the Dairy Security Act in its entirety.

11  
12 Imitation products should not be allowed to be labeled or advertised using dairy terms or  
13 names. We oppose redefining the products currently set up with the USDA.

14  
15 The present pricing method should be continued for fresh, reconstituted milk.

16  
17 We support a stabilized supply of milk and milk products, at levels which will adequately  
18 meet the needs of consumers.

19  
20 We support improving the level of income for dairy farmers to better meet their increased  
21 cost of production, in order to maintain a productive capacity to meet anticipated future needs.

22  
23 We support raising the minimum standards for fluid whole milk to 10 percent solids; non-fat  
24 and skim milk to 99 percent solids non-fat.

25  
26 We oppose raising the import quota on dairy products and removing tariffs on imported dairy  
27 products.

28  
29 We encourage the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) to make efforts to return milk protein  
30 casein plants to foster domestic use in the United States.

31  
32  
33 **E. PEANUTS**  
34

35 We support a more accurate price discovery in the marketplace for peanuts.

36  
37 We support an annual target price cost of production adjustment for peanuts.

38  
39 We believe storage and handling fees for peanuts in the government loan program should be  
40 paid by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA).

41  
42  
43 **F. OTHERS**  
44

45 We urge and encourage all farmers to explore producing alternate cash crops where soil,  
46 water and climate permits, and urge research and extension services at land grant universities to  
47 supply valuable help in these areas.

48  
49 We support a ban on castor bean production in the State of Oklahoma.  
50



1 We oppose the growing, harvesting and processing of any crop which produces ricin, a toxic  
2 substance which can be lethal to humans and animals, can be market disrupting and considered a  
3 prime tool for use by terrorists to harm U.S. citizens.  
4

5 Due to expanding canola production in Oklahoma, we support the creation of actuarial rates  
6 that are put in place without prior written agreement requirements.  
7

## 8 **FEED, SEED, FERTILIZER, FUEL**

9  
10 We support research on the use of crops for pharmaceutical and nutraceutical purposes.  
11

12  
13 We support a program of adequate testing and sampling of commercial fertilizer and feed  
14 and seed with penalties being assessed when analysis is below specifications.  
15

16 We support educating farmers and grain handlers on the Plant Variety Protection Act (PVPA).  
17

18 We support modification of the PVPA of 1994 with respect to royalty fees taking in to  
19 consideration sound science, a reasonable period of time for specific commodities and on  
20 percentage of purity of seed.  
21

22 We support immunity from legal action for grain handlers from consequences of the PVPA  
23 when handling grain.  
24

25 We oppose agricultural producers being included in the Environmental Protection Agency's  
26 (EPA) enforcement of the spill prevention containment and control system.  
27

28 We believe that no state or federal executive order affecting the use of farm equipment or  
29 farm chemicals should be issued without prior notice and public hearings.

30 Anhydrous ammonia should continue to be classified as non-hazardous for the purpose of  
31 transporting nurse tanks on public roadways.  
32

33 We encourage privately owned anhydrous ammonia facilities and equipment to meet the  
34 same safety requirements and standards as that of licensed dealers. Furthermore, we encourage  
35 private owners to attend anhydrous ammonia safety training classes.  
36

37 We support funding for animal waste nutrients research.  
38  
39

## 40 **COMMISSIONS**

### 41 **B. COMMODITIES COMMISSION**

42 We support the commodity commissions, provided that the funds collected by force of law  
43 are used for research, promotion, education and policy development, and that their use for political  
44 purposes be strictly prohibited.  
45  
46

47  
48 We oppose state government taking commodity check-off funds to balance budgets.  
49

50 We support check-off programs on all commodities and periodic reporting to those paying  
51 for the check-off. We support mandatorily paid and voluntarily refundable check-off programs.

1 We support the collection of royalty fees on the sale of products developed by commodity  
2 check-off research dollars.

3  
4 We support the right of referendum by securing signatures of 10 percent of qualified  
5 producers of a commodity.

6  
7 All referenda should be conducted by mail or electronic media to ensure maximum  
8 participation by producers. Only eligible producers of a commodity shall have a vote on who is  
9 chosen for the promotion board that oversees collection and spending of funds. The eligible  
10 producer who receives the greatest number of producer votes must be seated.

11  
12 We support the right of referendum for a district to recall the appointment of the  
13 commissioner from that district.

14  
15 We urge the commissions to direct greater effort toward removing restrictions or obstructions  
16 that unduly limit the flow of agriculture commodities into domestic and foreign markets (such as  
17 embargoes, sanctions, strikes, grading standards, unreasonable inspection rules, and banning farm  
18 chemicals without sufficient cause and inequitable quality standards on imports).

19  
20 We oppose the consolidation of commodity commissions and/or any commission being  
21 placed under the control of any state agency.

22  
23 We support the ability of commodity commissions to develop a trust in which to deposit and  
24 utilize commission funds.

25  
26 We support exempting all agricultural commodity commissions from the Office of  
27 Management and Enterprise Services state purchasing system.

28  
29 We favor at least 20 percent of commodity commissions' gross income being used for  
30 research in Oklahoma.

31  
32  
33 **B. SCHOOL LAND COMMISSION**

34  
35 Leaseholders of school lands should be notified of a sale or re-lease.

36  
37 We support the sale of school land if no more than 5 percent of the school lands in any county  
38 are sold within a 12-month period and if all sales of school land are deposited within the trust fund,  
39 invested and not made available for use by the Oklahoma Legislature for appropriation purposes.  
40 All dividends should be returned to be used for the school children of Oklahoma.

41  
42 Lessees, who have made improvements on state school lands, should be reimbursed the fair  
43 market value for those improvements. Adjoining landowners also should be reimbursed for the  
44 portion that he or she paid for when the improvement was made, such as for building a fence.

45  
46  
47 **C. WILDLIFE COMMISSION**

48  
49 We support hunter safety education courses take place in a classroom setting with instruction  
50 by a qualified instructor.

1 We believe licenses should not be required for activities not related to hunting/fishing on  
2 Oklahoma Dept. of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) land.

3  
4 We support legislation to require at least four farmers or ranchers, by occupation, to be  
5 members of the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission.

6  
7 We oppose the listing of species as an endangered or threatened species without  
8 consideration to private property rights and without a study of the economic impact to the citizens  
9 of the state of Oklahoma. We additionally oppose the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service critical habitat  
10 rules for threatened species.

11  
12 We support voluntary pro-active cooperative efforts by the private sector landowner to  
13 restore potential threatened species by working with groups like the ODWC rather than a federal  
14 regulatory approach which could be counterproductive.

15  
16 We oppose the ODWC purchasing more land in the State of Oklahoma.

17  
18 We encourage the ODWC studying the concept of leasing private land for use as a wildlife  
19 public access area.

20  
21 We oppose non-native wildlife species introduction in Oklahoma.

22  
23 We encourage game rangers to conduct their duties in a professional and courteous manner  
24 and to respect the landowner and their property rights.

25  
26 Hunting licenses for the State of Oklahoma should have the following requirement printed  
27 on the back of the form: "This license can be canceled if the holder violates the present law of  
28 hunting or fishing on private property without permission from the owner, landlord or operator. It  
29 is hereby understood that the owner of the property is not responsible for any accident or injury  
30 sustained by persons entering land with or without permission."

31  
32 We recommend that an unlimited number of deer, either sex, be taken in overpopulated areas.  
33 Also, we support control of other wildlife species including geese, ducks, cattle egrets, feral hogs,  
34 and elk on depredation of farmers' crops. We support the enforcement of legislation prohibiting  
35 the deliberate release of swine to become feral hogs and agricultural producers' right to protect  
36 crops, livestock and fences from elk in all Oklahoma counties.

37  
38 We encourage the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF) to test and  
39 track deer and elk harvested for chronic wasting disease.

40  
41 We oppose the legalization of the use of dogs in the process of hunting deer.

## 42 43 44 **ANIMAL WELFARE**

45  
46 We oppose further laws or state questions, which would limit production agriculture by  
47 imposing restrictions on traditional methods of producing swine, poultry, equine and cattle.

48  
49 We urge our members to continue to educate the public on the fact that animals do not possess  
50 the same "rights" as humans.

## PEST, WEED AND DISEASE CONTROL

We support funding aggressive actions to prevent human, animal and plant diseases from entering the United States. We support effective strategies for dealing with diseases, should these enter the United States.

We urge immediate action to adequately fund a program to eradicate noxious plants including, but not limited to, all species of mesquite and cedars from Oklahoma. Such a program should include spraying of right-of-ways by federal, state and county agencies where needed.

As a general farm organization representing producers with a variety of commodities, we recognize the diversity of views regarding application of certain chemicals. Therefore we support continued education and responsible use regarding the use of all herbicides and pesticides.

We encourage record-keeping and on-label usage of all crop enhancement products (chemical applications) as a best management practice.

We support increased education on the proper use of dicamba and the continued review of regulations by ODAFF.

We support education efforts by the Oklahoma Cotton Council and Cooperative Extension Service on the proper use of dicamba.

We encourage cooperation among agriculture stakeholders to provide education and training for best management practices for pesticide storage, handling and application.

We encourage the Oklahoma Mesonet and/or the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF) be provided funding to create and make available to producers adequate climatic information for the application of herbicides, insecticides and burning.

We encourage implementation of an approved burn plan when doing prescribed burns and if followed precisely, landowners should be provided some degree of liability protection. We encourage educational programs to inform landowners of the proper way to develop and implement a prescribed burn plan.

We support funding of a prescribed burn indemnity fund to be administered at the ODAFF.

Before an agricultural chemical can be removed from the market, factual evidence must be obtained by the agency with jurisdiction that its use will adversely affect human and animal health or that it is hazardous to the environment and the economic impact be considered when no alternative exists.

We favor enforcement of the law requiring all harvesting equipment be thoroughly cleaned prior to interstate travel.

We support the continued use of phostoxin as pest control in grain storage facilities, until a suitable and affordable replacement is provided.

We urge continued support of the Oklahoma Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory and the Oklahoma State University Center for Veterinary Health Sciences (OSU-CVHS).

1 Now that Oklahoma is a Brucellosis-free state, efforts must continue to ensure that we remain  
2 Brucellosis-free.

3  
4 We support a joint effort between OSU and ODAFF in requesting additional state and federal  
5 funds for the control and eradication of ticks, fire ants, killer bees and parasitic mites in domestic  
6 bees in Oklahoma.

7  
8 We support the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS) area-  
9 wide research efforts in Oklahoma and across the nation to control imported fire ants, using a  
10 combination of treatment methods, including natural predators.

11  
12 We urge the Oklahoma Legislature to continue to appropriate monies to provide for the  
13 control and/or eradication of crows, blackbirds, skunks, prairie dogs, beavers, coyotes, raccoons,  
14 feral hogs and other predatory animals in areas where they have become destructive or a menace  
15 to crops and livestock.

16  
17 We urge the state and federal government to take more aggressive steps to control feral hogs,  
18 including the enforcement and maintenance of feral hog free zones.

19  
20 We support the right of a landowner to use whatever means possible to protect any  
21 agricultural crop or species of livestock, and/or processed feed, seed or other materials used in the  
22 production of an agricultural commodity from depredation, damage or destruction by any nuisance  
23 animal species.

24  
25 We urge the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to continue to support predator control and limit  
26 any restrictive rule that affects the ability of the field men to do their work in predator control.

27  
28 Farmers and ranchers should be allowed to control predators or varmints on their land by the  
29 most effective, safe and economical means.

30  
31 We recommend that any wildlife, or other exotic birds and animals transported to, within, or  
32 through the State of Oklahoma, be certified by ODAFF to be free of infectious, contagious and  
33 communicable diseases and/or parasites.

34  
35 We support prescribed burning liability relief legislation to protect individuals that have been  
36 educated and follow the appropriate protocols when conducting a burn.

37  
38 We support the state and federal government working with landowners to utilize prescribed  
39 burning to reduce the threat of wildfire.

40  
41 We support designation of the black vulture as a nuisance species and measures be taken to  
42 eliminate this threat to American livestock.

43  
44  
45 **AG RESEARCH AND EXTENSION**

46  
47 We call for a minimum of one agricultural educator and one family and consumer science  
48 educator in each county for continuing adult education for farmers, ranchers and homemakers. We  
49 also encourage a strong 4-H club program in each county.

1 We support utilizing a citizen county, district and state advisory system as a means to provide  
2 grassroots input to the leadership of the cooperative extension and research service.

3  
4 We support a concerted effort to obtain adequate funding for Oklahoma State University  
5 (OSU), the Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station (OAES) and the Oklahoma Cooperative  
6 Extension Service (OCES) in every county.

7  
8 We support developing a national clearinghouse for compiling and making available a  
9 database with all agriculture research being conducted by state land-grant universities.

10  
11 We support the GrazingLands Research Laboratory at Fort Reno and the Southern Plains  
12 Research Lab in Woodward. This research in livestock grazing and erosion control is vital to  
13 Southwest United States agriculture.

14  
15 We support funding for the Expanded Wheat Pasture Research Unit at Oklahoma State  
16 University.

17 We support funding to reestablish the Oklahoma AgriAbility Project.

18  
19  
20 We encourage the Board of Regents to fully allocate all funds appropriated by the Legislature  
21 to OSU and Cooperative Extension and Experiment Station.

22  
23 We support expanded research on soil health practices by USDA-NRCS, Oklahoma  
24 Agricultural Experiment Station, Noble Research Institute and our various agricultural schools in  
25 Oklahoma.

26  
27 We support continued funding for USDA-ARS facilities.

1 **DEFINITIONS**

2  
3 **A. HISTORICAL PARITY DEFINED:**

4  
5 Congress has, by law, defined “fair” as the economic relationship that existed between  
6 prices received by farmers and their production costs, including family living expenses, during  
7 the five-year period 1910-1914.

8  
9 The prices received by farmers are said to be at “100 percent of parity” (or “fairness”)  
10 when they have the same relationship to production and living expenses as they did during that  
11 period. The parity formula is kept up-to-date continuously, by:

12 (1) revising the list of services and items purchased by farmers for production and family  
13 living to reflect today’s technology; and

14 (2) by adjusting the parity prices for each farm commodity to take into account the 10-year  
15 moving average of changes that occur in the relationship to each other by the actual market  
16 prices received by farmers for the respective commodities.

17  
18 **B. FAMILY FARM DEFINED:**

19  
20 Characteristically, a family farm is owned and operated by a farm family, with the family  
21 providing the base of the labor needed for the farming operation, assuming the economic risk,  
22 making most of the management decisions and depending on farming and/or ranching for a  
23 significant portion of their living.