



2017 Farm Bureau Policy

Adopted by
delegates at the
97th Wisconsin Farm
Bureau Federation
Annual Meeting.

About Farm Bureau

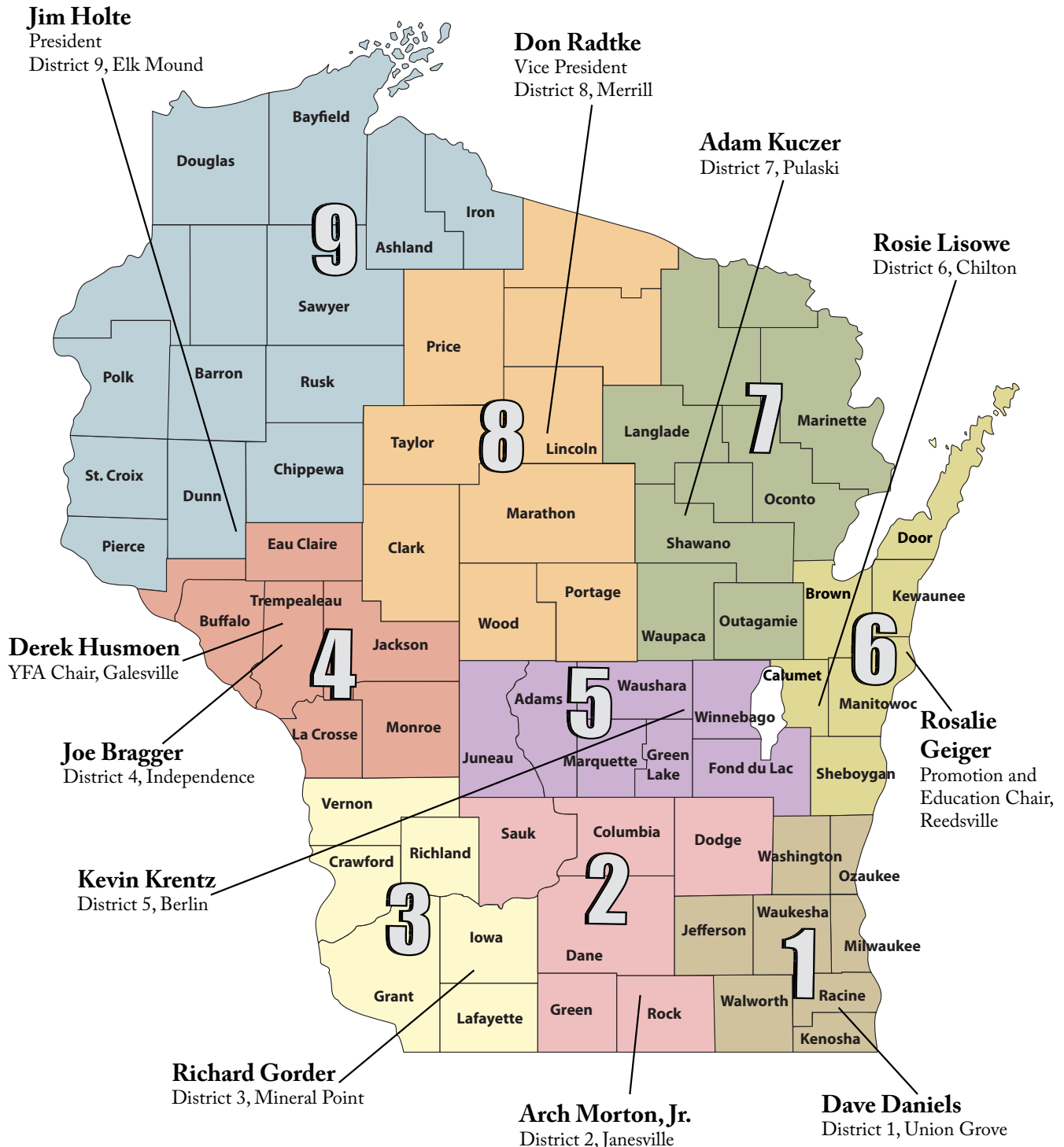
Vision

Lead a **growing** and **dynamic** agriculture.

Mission

Lead the farm and rural community through legislative representation, education, public relations, leadership development and providing services and benefits to members.

2017 WFBF State Board of Directors



Wisconsin Farm Bureau Policy

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1 **DAIRY**

2 **Antibiotics** – We recommend that dairy plants use a standardized test for antibiotic testing.

3
4 **Dairy 30 x 20** – We support the Dairy 30 x 20 initiative, which has the mission of trying to strengthen Wisconsin’s
5 dairy industry.

6
7 **Dairy Goats** – Since dairy goats have different somatic cell count issues than dairy cows, we support establishing
8 separate milk quality regulations.

9
10 **Inspections** – We believe that state inspections are an important part of a quality dairy industry. However, the
11 frequency and extent of individual farm inspections should be in direct relation to the quality of milk, regardless
12 of grade, being produced on each farm. An existing well, which is producing safe water, should not, because of its
13 location, force a producer off the Grade A market.

14
15 When a dairy farmer has a suspect sample, we support allowing a retest within a week. If the retest sample meets
16 milk quality standards, the dairy farm should remain on its current inspection schedule.

17
18 Dairy inspection regulations should be updated to reflect current technology, construction and production practices.

19
20 **Labeling** – We urge that only cheese manufactured in the state be allowed to be labeled as “Wisconsin cheese.”

21
22 The term ‘milk’ should not be used to label and describe food products that are derived from vegetative plants and
23 trees.

24
25 **Promotion** – We support the efforts of the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board and its funding for dairy promotion and
26 product development purposes.

27
28 **Raw Milk Sales** – We oppose the sale of raw milk directly to consumers.

29
30 **School Milk** – We encourage all schools in the state to have milk vending machines in order to make milk available
31 throughout the school day.

32
33 We believe the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board should provide financial incentives for the placement of these
34 machines in schools.

35
36 We encourage school districts to offer students the choice of white and flavored milk.

37
38 **Technology** – We support the use of scientifically proven technologies for agricultural production practices.

39
40 **EDUCATION**

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

45
46 **Ag in the Classroom** – We support more education on modern agriculture and food production at the elementary
47 and secondary levels.

48
49 **Ag Research** – We support increased funding of agricultural research. We favor biotechnology research that is
50 properly monitored with reasonable safety, social and economic standards being followed prior to and during
51 implementation of the research.

52
53 We support public and private funded research on best management practices that will result in less reliance on
54 agricultural chemicals for weed and pest control.

55
56 We recommend that the University of Wisconsin (UW) System place more emphasis on applied research for the
57 benefit of production agriculture.

1 We support continued public and private research for “new uses” of farm commodities and alternative crops.
2 Agricultural research should take nutritional value into consideration when developing new crop varieties, not just
3 yield and appearance.

4
5 We support the Discovery Farms Program and the UW-Platteville Pioneer Farm which were created to develop
6 practical and affordable methods and techniques for complying with environmental standards.

7
8 **Elementary & Secondary** – Elementary and secondary education is essential to the development of the individual.
9 Local school boards are being forced to comply with additional state and federal standards to qualify for aids. We
10 believe these regulations erode the rights of local citizens and divert attention from the basic educational needs of our
11 youth. We support legislation that will return control of education to the local boards of education and the citizens
12 they represent.

13
14 Be it resolved that the Wisconsin Department of Education should notify all school districts that local school boards
15 have the right to opt out of Common Core in their school district at any time.

16
17 We believe that school boards should not approve higher spending for school operation and maintenance than was
18 approved at the annual meeting. We suggest that a special meeting be called by the school board if they significantly
19 exceed the budget adopted at the annual meeting.

20
21 We oppose state mandated pre-school programs. We recommend that the school calendar and school day remain a
22 local decision.

23
24 We oppose the creation of school districts through forced consolidation of outlying districts into metro districts.

25
26 Since some students have special educational needs that place an additional burden on the property tax, we urge that
27 funding of their special education be the responsibility of state government.

28
29 We support requiring schools that receive voucher funds from the state to be held to the same testing standards as
30 public schools. We oppose any further expansion of the school voucher system.

31
32 **School Aids** - We believe that the net income of taxpayers in a school district should be a factor in the state school
33 aid formula. We support maintaining state funding to school districts with declining enrollment with special
34 consideration for rural schools.

35
36 **Technical College System** – Technical College System tuition should more closely reflect the costs associated with
37 the program being offered. We support the current method in place by the Wisconsin Technical board to appoint
38 members to Technical College boards.

39
40 The Technical College System should continue to serve the needs of the farm community. We favor the development
41 of closer coordination between post high school vocational and academic education programs to better utilize our
42 educational facilities.

43
44 We encourage technical colleges and UW Extension to offer safety courses, including the *Wisconsin Safe Operation of*
45 *Tractor and Machinery Certification Program*, on operating equipment found on farms and implements of husbandry on
46 farms and public roads.

47
48 **UW System** – We support programs to enhance the capability of our Colleges of Agriculture to respond to the
49 educational and research needs of farmers, which ultimately benefits all of society. We believe that all credits should
50 be transferable within our state university system.

51
52 We support maintaining the necropsy services and employing a state licensed veterinarian in the Barron Diagnostic
53 Lab in Northwestern WI.

54
55 We encourage the UW System, the Technical College System, Research Farms, Discovery Farms and UW Extension to
56 collaborate with each other to utilize resources more effectively to serve the agricultural community.

57
58 We encourage UW Extension agricultural agents to work across county lines. These agents are not required to have a
59 Master’s Degree.

1 We also encourage UW Extension to establish regions in which specialized agricultural agents are assigned. These
2 agents are required to have a Master's Degree.

3

4 We urge the continuation of a strong UW Extension agricultural program in Wisconsin. We also urge county boards
5 to appoint an UW Extension user group advisory board. Members should be appointed by UW Extension user
6 groups and be voting members of the committee.

7

8 We encourage the UW System to incorporate literature into its curriculum that reflects a balanced perspective based
9 on sound science and technology when discussing food production systems.

10

11 We support state approval of the Babcock Hall project on the UW-Madison campus.

12

13 We support funding for the Wisconsin Environmental Education Board.

14

15 **ENERGY**

16 **Alternative Sources** – We support research and incentives to develop alternate sources of energy, and electrical
17 generation within the state.

18

19 We are in favor of allowing third party investors to develop alternate energy sources.

20

21 We support requiring all gasoline to contain 15% ethanol.

22

23 We support the use of ethanol, E-85, or bio-diesel in all school buses, and all other taxpayer supported vehicles.

24

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

26

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

32

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

35

36 We oppose stray voltage legislation that results in allowing utilities automatic immunity, stray voltage cases having
37 a shorter statute of limitations than other civil cases, limiting testing of electrical current or voltage levels to utilities
38 only and limiting legal remedy by use of Public Service Commission definitions.

39

40 **Electrical Transmission & Distribution System** – We support the modernization and maintenance of lines,
41 equipment and facilities for all utilities in order to meet current and future demands and alleviate electrical quality
42 problems. We support requiring utilities to comply with Wisconsin State Electrical Codes.

43

44 Further, we support requiring the Public Service Commission (PSC) to establish a timeline when the earth can no
45 longer be used as a primary neutral return path. During that time, we support expanded research and development
46 of alternative distribution systems to replace the current multi-grounded neutral system.

47

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

50

51 We support requiring the PSC to increase the rate of return from renewable energy sources.

52

53 Energy companies should not be able to charge back more than six months for faulty meters.

54

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

58

59

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

4
5 We support the construction of new generation coal-fired power plants in areas of the state experiencing expanding
6 electrical demands in order to eliminate the need for long distance transmission lines and to ensure adequate
7 electricity at an affordable price.

8
9 We support lifting the moratorium on the building of nuclear power plants and the increased use and development
10 of nuclear energy. We support the rebuilding and maintenance of existing dams for hydroelectric power and flood
11 control purposes.

12
13 **Rural Electric Cooperatives** – We reaffirm the unrestricted right and responsibility of all rural electric systems
14 to serve those areas in which they initiate service and continue to serve. We strongly oppose the imposition of
15 conditions or restrictions, which disadvantage the cooperatives in extending or continuing service in these areas.

16
17 **Telecommunications** – All telecommunication facilities shall also be designed and constructed so that they comply
18 with PSC rules.

19
20 We support an increase in the overall appropriation for the broadband grant program. We support improving and
21 upgrading the strength and reliability of coverage to enable efficient use of technology in farming practices in rural
22 areas.

23
24 We support expanded cellular and broad band telecommunication coverage for rural areas.

25 26 **FARM FINANCE**

27 **Beginning Farmers** – We support incentive programs (i.e. loans, tax incentives and grants), through existing lending
28 institutions and government agencies, that assist in the transfer or startup of a farm. We support allowing loan
29 guarantees to be extended to individuals providing land contracts similar to what is currently provided to lending
30 institutions.

31
32 **Wisconsin Housing & Economic Development Authority** – We support continuation of Wisconsin Housing and
33 Economic Development Authority loan programs to agriculture and agribusiness.

34
35 We support requiring lending institutions remove their filings from the uniform commercial code at the time the lien
36 has been satisfied.

37 38 **GENERAL GOVERNMENT**

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

44
45 Public employee wages and benefits should more closely reflect those in the private sector.

46
47 We support allowing official legal notices to be in free newspaper publications if no other paid publications are
48 available within the county.

49
50 **Cabinet Government** – We support having the Governor appoint the Secretary of the Department of Agriculture,
51 Trade and Consumer Protection and the Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources.

52
53 **County Boards** – We support repeal of the law allowing county boards to change their size between each census.

54
55 We support requiring a two-thirds majority vote by the county board to approve any bonding authority for new
56 county projects.

57
58 **County Fairs** – We support increasing state funding for county fair premiums. We support having a county fair
59 coordinator at the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection.

1 **County Farm Service Agency (FSA) Boards** – If county FSA offices are closed, we support having equitable
2 representation from each county on the consolidated FSA board.

3
4 **Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection (DATCP)** – We support DATCP remaining as an
5 individual department. We oppose transferring DATCP’s consumer protection functions to the Department of Justice
6 (DOJ). We support establishing a one-stop shop for all permits needed for farms and agribusinesses.

7
8 We support dog kennel inspectors leaving completed inspection forms on site.

9
10 We support the production, processing, commercialization and utilization of industrial hemp and that it be regulated
11 by USDA rather than the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

12
13 **Department of Corrections (DOC)** – We are opposed to the expansion of the farming operation at the Department of
14 Corrections and support the sale of all excess acres.

15
16 **Department of Natural Resources (DNR)** – We support requiring at least one DNR Board seat be occupied by a
17 farmer.

18
19 We believe that the names of individuals filing a complaint with the DNR against a landowner should be disclosed to
20 that landowner.

21
22 We support a local approval process to hold the DNR responsible for their decisions at the township and county
23 level.

24
25 We support a reduction in funding to the DNR in the state budget.

26
27 We encourage the DNR to works towards creating a more transparent, user friendly agency when interacting with
28 the agricultural sector.

29
30 **Elections** – We believe that school, county and other local referendums should be offered only on regularly scheduled
31 election days. Referendums should be written in simple and concise language to not confuse the voter. We support
32 uniform poll hours of 7 am to 8 pm throughout Wisconsin. All voters should be required to have photo identification.

33
34 We favor township elections where the supervisors are elected by staggered terms. We support raising the minimum
35 percentage for a recall election of town officials to 50 percent of the voters in the last presidential election from 25
36 percent.

37
38 We support giving the state Supreme Court the responsibility of redistricting.

39
40 We support requiring accumulated campaign funds of any state elected official not seeking re-election to be
41 transferred to the state’s general fund.

42
43 We support revising the use of recall elections only in cases of criminal activity or willful neglect of duty.

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

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

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

53
54 We support limits on the amount of compensation a person can receive for pain and suffering.

55
56 **Mandated Programs** – We believe that the costs of government mandated programs should be picked up by the unit
57 of government which mandates the program.

58
59

1 **Minimum Markup** – We support limiting the minimum markup law to prohibit the selling of products below cost
2 except in merchandise clearing instances.
3

4 We support repeal of the minimum markup law as it relates to gasoline and diesel fuel.
5

6 **Nutrition Assistance** – We oppose food stamps being used as payment at restaurants or on taxable foods from the
7 grocery store. Food stamps should have picture identification similar to driver’s license identification cards.
8

9 **Veto Authority** – We support limiting the Governor’s line item veto to prohibit the transfer of funds from one project
10 to another.
11

12 **Volunteer Fire Departments & Emergency Medical Staff (EMS)** – Due to lack of economic resources in rural fire
13 protection districts, we oppose efforts that force the disbandment of volunteer fire departments and EMS units and
14 mandate the hiring of full-time employees.
15

16 We support that all county sheriffs and state troopers have animal handling training.
17

18 **HEALTH & SAFETY**

19 **Health Care** – We support continued efforts to develop a comprehensive solution for private, affordable, high
20 quality, accessible health care and health insurance. We support allowing farmers and their employees to enroll in the
21 state health insurance program.
22

23 We support the continuation of the Farmer’s Health Cooperative.
24

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

29 We support tax deductible health savings accounts. We support changing BadgerCare eligibility criteria to exclude
30 depreciation from net taxable income. We support 100% deductibility from income taxes for long-term health care
31 premiums.
32

33 **Safety** – We support educational and training programs for emergency personnel to help prepare them for farm and
34 other agricultural emergencies.
35

36 We support classifying skid steers as agriculture, as well as construction. We also support training and safety
37 programs/certification for youth similar to *All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) & Utility-Terrain Vehicle (UTV) Certification and*
38 *Wisconsin Safe Operation of Tractor and Machinery Certification programs.*
39

40 **HUNTING & WILDLIFE**

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

46 The DNR should reduce the time it takes to get a bear hunting license to 3 years or issue more damage abatement
47 shooting permits.
48

49 **Baiting and Feeding** – We support banning deer feeding and baiting in order to prevent the spread of disease. We
50 support requiring the DNR to practice good stewardship and provide reasonable accommodation for food as well as
51 habitat on land owned by the DNR.
52

53 **Hunting Regulations** – We support the right to hunt, fish, trap, and to take game subject to reasonable rules and
54 regulations. We support allowing crossbow hunting during the muzzleloader season. We support over the counter
55 sales for turkey and bear licenses. Operating farmers should be issued a free deer, bear and turkey license and that
56 the license be an open season license upon request to be used on the landowner’s property.
57

58 We support the right to protect domestic livestock or pets from predators regardless of the predators’ endangered
59 status.

1 We support a year-round open hunting season for coyote.

2

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

5

6 **Hunting Seasons** – We support hunting seasons, as in other states, for Sandhill Cranes and other game species.

7

8 We urge that the state eliminate the closed season on raccoon until the population is under control.

9

10 We support establishing a general turkey hunting season.

11
12 We support starting the bear hunting season August 15.

13

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

16

17 **Roadkill** – We recommend that local governments be responsible for removal of large, undomesticated roadkill
18 carcasses from highway right-of-ways in a timely manner.

19

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

22

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

26

- 27 • **General** – Landowners enrolled in the program should be permitted to charge a fee for recreational use purposes.
28 Farmers and aquaculturists should be able to harvest animals causing crop and livestock damage. We support
29 eliminating the September 15 deadline for wildlife damage permit performance standards.
- 30
- 31 • **Funding** – We support increased hunting license fees and/or general purpose revenues when necessary to fund
32 damage claims at 100 percent since state residents as a whole favor a large state wildlife population. Wildlife
33 Damage Program funds should be used only for payment to farmers for crop damage and abatement.
- 34
- 35 • **Non-game and protected species** – We support extension of Wildlife Damage Program coverage to protected non-
36 game species. Further, we support the removal of seagulls and Sandhill Cranes from the protected list.
- 37
- 38 • **Payments** – Property that receives crop damage payments should be open to the public for hunting of that
39 particular species, with hunter access controlled by the landowner. Further, we support Wildlife Damage Program
40 participant farmers receiving a payment of \$50 to \$100 per deer registered with animal damage tags. Farmers
41 should be able to collect 100 percent of assessed crop damage on rented land where the landowner will not allow
42 hunting to fulfill abatement program shooting requirements. Farmers should be compensated for their time and
43 labor needed to participate in the program. We support eliminating the trapping and relocation of bear as part of
44 the wildlife damage and abatement program. We support lowering the deductible and increasing the claims limit
45 for farmers participating in the DNR's crop damage program.
- 46
- 47 • **Shooting and Nuisance Permits** – We support continuing the shooting permit program to allow the additional
48 harvest of deer, bear, and wild turkeys on farms suffering chronic damage. Further we support expanding the
49 shooting permit program to include Sandhill Cranes. Nuisance permits should be issued for bear when crop or
50 livestock damage exceeds \$500.

51

52 We support the elimination of the \$10,000 cap for producers as part of the Wildlife Damage Abatement and Claims
53 program.

54

55 We support combining the authorization to trap and hunt bears on a renter's property on one form.

56

57 We require using technology (i.e. UAVs and electronic trap monitors) in order to monitor wildlife abatement traps
58 and to assess crop damage. We also believe that this technology should be at the DNR's expense.

59

1 **Wildlife Introduction** – We support a requirement that the DNR and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conduct an
2 agricultural impact statement before any species of wildlife is introduced into a new area and distribute the results to
3 local landowners. If the species is introduced, the DNR should be required to pay for any crop and livestock damage
4 resulting from such action.

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

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

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

15
16 We support limiting the bear population to the original state goal.

17
18 We support requiring DNR to accurately reflect wildlife populations and the damage being done in Wisconsin. We
19 support appropriate actions to reduce populations.

20
21 **Wolf Management** – We support keeping the wolf population at or below 350 in Wisconsin. We support requiring
22 DNR to include farmer participation in wolf management planning.

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

27
28 We support hunting and/or trapping seasons for wolves.

29
30 We support eliminating all predator animal re-introduction funding to the DNR.

31
32 We support disclosure of wolf incidents in Wisconsin by the DNR. The public information should be located on the
33 WI DNR website, establishing warning areas when wolf packs are involved, and providing instant e-mail notification
34 of all incidents.

35 36 **LABOR**

37 **Mediation/Arbitration** – We believe contract negotiations with teachers and other local government employees
38 should be a local responsibility. We urge the repeal of final and binding arbitration.

39
40 We support changing the mediation arbitration process to allow arbitrators to modify either side’s proposal in order
41 to reach a compromise.

42
43 **Minimum Wage** – We oppose increasing the state minimum wage or any other labor requirements beyond those
44 required federally. We support a two-tiered minimum wage for agriculture workers with adult minimum wage at
45 \$7.25 per hour and minor minimum wage at 80 percent of the adult minimum wage.

46
47 **Prevailing Wage Law** – We support repeal of the prevailing wage law.

48
49 **Workers’ Compensation** – We support maintaining the minimum number of employees under workers
50 compensation at six and increasing the minimum days required from 21 to 60.

51 52 **LAND USE**

53 **Annexation** – We support state legislation that will allow only the annexation of land owned by the petitioners.

54
55 We support greater township control over the annexation of property and urge more boundary agreements among
56 municipalities.

57
58 We support requiring a municipality that annexes land from a neighboring township to pay off the township debt
59 allocated to that land as part of the annexation.

1 **Eminent Domain** – Eminent domain laws should not be used to confiscate private property for private uses or
2 private gain.
3

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

10
11 We support changing the wording of Wisconsin’s eminent domain law from “for the public good” to “for the public
12 necessity.” Further, we support a definition of “public necessity” as “that without which the public health and safety
13 would be endangered.”
14

15 We support using state eminent domain laws rather than federal condemnation procedures in siting gas pipelines.
16 We believe that eminent domain projects should be required to utilize public land as much as possible.
17

18 We support requiring land owners affected by eminent domain projects to be notified and given the opportunity
19 to participate in any negotiated agricultural mitigation agreements. Any agricultural mitigation agreement should
20 contain an enforcement clause with a sufficient non-compliance penalty.
21

22 The Department of Transportation (DOT) and utility companies should be required to compensate the crop producer
23 for crops being destroyed through eminent domain or during construction of the project.
24

25 We support requiring an agriculture impact statement be done to assist in the approval process and help determine
26 compensation for projects that are using eminent domain.
27

28 **Farmland Preservation** – We support local planning and/or zoning as the primary mechanisms to preserve
29 farmland.
30

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

37 We oppose the 15-year contract requirement to enter an Ag Enterprise Area. We support a 10-year contract
38 requirement.
39

40 We recommend Working Lands Initiative Program add a formula similar to the Farmland Preservation Credit
41 (FPC) based on the property taxes and income and give landowners a choice based on which is more beneficial to
42 encompass the financial needs of all farm taxpayers.
43

44 **Local Planning & Zoning** – We support the goals of the Smart Growth program provided the planning process
45 continues to be locally controlled and the state provides adequate funding for the development of these plans in rural
46 areas. We oppose state and federal regulation of land use. Zoning and land use plans should apply to government
47 bodies as well as private individuals. We support creating an “opt-out” provision for municipalities within the Smart
48 Growth Planning law.
49

50 We encourage counties to adopt housing density zoning for cluster development to help save productive farmland
51

52 We urge the publication of proposed changes in zoning rules and ordinances with a reasonable time to allow the
53 public to take action to correct any injustices. When government bodies are taking action on individual zoning
54 changes, special assessments or other matters affecting the value of private property, the owner of the property and
55 adjoining landowners should be notified in writing prior to meetings or hearings on the actions.
56

57 We oppose extra-territorial zoning. We also support increasing the population threshold to 50,000 in order for cities
58 to exercise extra-territorial zoning within a three-mile radius.
59

1 We support legislation to create charter towns.

2

3 We support allowing farmers to sell products, grown on their farm, at a location on their farm without having to
4 be rezoned. We support legislation allowing farmers to erect and maintain a professionally painted sign on their
5 property to advertise their farm produce. This would take precedence over town or county ordinances prohibiting
6 such signage on farmer owned property.

7

8 We recommend local units of government not be permitted to regulate United States Department of Agriculture
9 (USDA) licensed and inspected kennels.

10

11 We recommend that if a farm is zoned agricultural and has a USDA or state-licensed and inspected kennel/breeding
12 operation that this activity be fully viewed as a part of the agribusiness on the farm. We recommend that state
13 regulations mirror USDA for the inspection and licensing of kennels.

14

15 **Privacy** – We support the use of Unmanned Aerial Vehicle’s (UAVs) for commercial and agricultural purposes.
16 We require the operator of the drone to gain consent of the land operator to operate in corresponding airspace. The
17 information collected is the sole property of the land operator.

18

19 Data generated on-farm is property of the operator/farmer. The data can only be used by others if a consent form has
20 been signed by the operator/farmer.

21

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

25

26 We support legislation to facilitate the recovery of financial loss for nuisance lawsuits for time, attorney fees, and lost
27 income for not being able to develop ethanol plants, wind farms, water plants, generating plants, non-metallic mining
28 and livestock facilities.

29

30 We support the law that limits foreign nationals or their formed entities from land ownership in excess of 640 acres.

31

32 We support the state’s adverse possession law as it has historically existed.

33

34 **Public Land** – We support a public policy which would require all public agencies to use lands which are less
35 valuable for agricultural use for public projects. We believe that land should only be acquired by the government for
36 truly public purposes, and any government owned lands which are not used for public purposes should be returned
37 to the former or adjacent property owner. We support requiring state agencies that buy land to notify all local units
38 of government affected by the land purchase at least 60 days in advance. State and federal agencies purchasing land
39 should have to justify the price paid when they outbid private landowners.

40

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

43

44 We encourage towns and counties to work with land owners to investigate a process for land owners to be
45 compensated for doing maintenance within the highway rights-of-way.

46

47 We recommend that agricultural land currently owned by the DNR be leased back to farmers at local rates and under
48 local customs.

49

50 **Purchase of Development Rights** – We support efforts to target Stewardship Program funds for the purchase of
51 development rights of productive agricultural land.

52

53 We support purchase of development rights programs and transfer of development rights programs that are
54 consistent with local comprehensive planning and zoning. There needs to be acreage minimums. Local decision
55 making is needed.

56

57 We support using funds from the USDA Farm and Ranch Land Protection program to help fund purchase of
58 development rights programs.

59

1 We support requiring purchases by land trusts that receive government funding to be consistent with local
2 comprehensive planning and zoning.

3
4 **Right-to-Farm** – We support continued efforts which will protect agricultural operations from nuisance suits
5 resulting from odor, dust, noise, etc. when the farming enterprise is operated in accordance with current agricultural
6 practices. We also urge consideration of the role zoning, education, research and other activities may play in helping
7 to prevent or alleviate these conflicts between differing land uses.

8
9 We support amending the Right-to Farm Law to prohibit plaintiffs from applying public human health and safety
10 standards to the environment. Further, we support strengthening the law by increasing the penalty for filing nuisance
11 lawsuits found to have no merit. The punitive penalty should be equal to 50 percent of the producer’s legal costs to
12 defend himself/herself.

13
14 We support having public agencies (town, county and state) that file nuisance lawsuits be held liable for defense costs
15 in litigation where the case is found to have no merit.

16
17 We support legislation to prohibit local units of government from regulating or banning the use or growing of biotech
18 or genetically engineered crops or products.

19
20 We support statewide uniform standards, provided they do not put us at a competitive disadvantage with other
21 states, for farming operations rather than a patchwork of local and county ordinances. We believe that farmers should
22 be able to operate and expand their farms as they choose as long as they comply with state and federal environmental
23 regulations.

24
25 **Stewardship Program** – We support a reduction in the Stewardship Program, prohibiting stewardship purchases of
26 tillable land and targeting program purchases to non-agricultural land. The DNR should not be allowed to bond for
27 land purchases.

28
29 We support prohibiting the DNR from purchasing land under the stewardship program until a county and its
30 townships have completed a comprehensive plan. Stewardship Program purchases of land must be consistent with
31 the adopted plan.

32
33 We oppose allowing non-profit tax-exempt groups to buy property and then sell it to a governmental entity for a
34 profit in the name of preservation. We support requiring the DNR to sell two acres of land for every acre it purchases.

35
36 When the DNR purchases agricultural land, the payment in lieu of property taxes should be calculated at the
37 purchase price.

38
39 **Surveying** – We recommend that all parties, especially utility companies, use material other than metal to mark
40 reference points on farm property.

41
42 **Trespass & Liability** – We support action to recognize and enforce ownership rights to prohibit unwanted activities
43 on private property, including those of government agencies. We support requiring DNR wardens to enforce trespass
44 laws.

45
46 Landowners should not be held liable for those injured when using land, with or without permission. State law
47 currently provides protection from liability for landowners that allow the recreational use of their land. However,
48 we urge that the maximum amount of compensation allowed for recreational use under this statute be substantially
49 increased.

50 **LIVESTOCK**

51 **Animal Identification System** – We support the state’s livestock premise registration program. However, we oppose
52 fees on producers to pay for livestock premise registration.

53
54 We oppose state legislation to mandate individual animal identification.

55
56 **Animal Welfare** – We support a farmer’s right, in consultation with their veterinarians, to set appropriate protocol
57 for common animal husbandry practices to be administered by the farmer or trained employee that are appropriate
58 for their farm. We support further education of consumers on the merits of common animal husbandry practices.

1 We also support animal-based medical research which benefits both humans and animals.

2

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

5

6 We support allowing audio and/or visual recordings on private property, including farms and livestock handling
7 facilities, but only if approved by the facility owners.

8

9 We support requiring persons witnessing animal abuse to report findings to management and the proper authorities
10 within 24 hours of witnessing such action, or face being prosecuted. Any video footage submitted must be unedited.

11

12 We support legislation prohibiting local units of government from regulating animal care and welfare and granting
13 this authority to DATCP.

14

15 We support legislation prohibiting local units of government from regulating animal care and welfare and granting
16 this authority to DATCP.

17

18 **Disease** – We support the continuation of interstate testing for brucellosis of livestock from states that are not “class-
19 free.” We recommend stronger action be taken against those who violate brucellosis laws and regulations.

20

21 All animal health regulations, both domestic and wild, should be under DATCP’s authority.

22

23 **Veterinarians** – We support an incentive program to encourage large animal study and practice in the state. We
24 support legislation requiring veterinarians to make portable written prescriptions available to their clients.

25

26 We oppose the classification of horses and other equine as companion animals.

27

28 **MARKETING**

29 **Direct Marketing** – We support allowing local breweries and wineries to directly market their products.

30

31 **Disparagement** – Since false claims about food products can have a devastating impact on the livelihood of farm
32 families, we support enactment of state disparagement legislation.

33

34 **Labeling** – We oppose mandated labeling of Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) products or ingredients in
35 Wisconsin.

36

37 We support standardization of vomatoxin testing for grain merchandisers and laboratories used by crop insurance
38 adjusters. Vomatoxin levels should be included on each weight slip.

39

40 **Producer Security** – We support a state’s indemnity fund law that will enhance a producer’s ability to recover losses
41 due to the financial failure of a handler or processor; however, we believe the following changes need to be made to
42 the program.

43

- 44 • Cap the level of the fund and keep dairy, grain and vegetable accounts separate. This keeps one industry from
45 subsidizing a failure in another.
- 46 • Limit the purpose of Agriculture Producer fund to defaults due to business failure.
- 47 • Allow all contractors who meet or exceed certain financial criteria to be exempt from the indemnity fund
48 assessments.
- 49 • Allow processors to post private security instead of participating in the program.
- 50 • Cap assessment rates for each milk contractor at a rate determined by a simple average of the assessment rates over
51 a three year moving average of program participation. This would stop milk buyers from being “punished” for
52 revolving equity or expanding their business.
- 53 • Require financial statements ordinarily used by the processor. Eliminate DATCP staff review of financial statements
54 to save staff expenses.
- 55 • Exempt producers that retain title to their commodities throughout the processing and sale of the finished products.
- 56 • Interest from funds should go toward program costs to reduce fees.
- 57 • Require DATCP to substantially reduce administrative costs.
- 58 • Include all potato and vegetable production under Wisconsin’s Ag Producer Security Program.

59

1 We believe that all produce should be paid for within 30 days of delivery or per contract stipulations.

2

3 We support allowing producer associations to negotiate on behalf of producers for fair and equal contracts.

4

5 **Promotion** – We support the continued promotion of Wisconsin agricultural products through the use of labeling and
6 special advertising.

7

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

10

11 **Sustainability** – We encourage farmers and consumers to be actively engaged in sustainability discussions.
12 Responsibility for a balanced approach must include all stakeholders contributing to an outcome that enhances the
13 quality of life for present and future generations. We recognize there are three essential components to defining
14 sustainability: social, environmental and economic.

15

16 We believe each component should contain the following goals:

17

18 Social

19

- Fair treatment and wages for employees
- Acceptable land stewardship and animal care
- Local involvement within the community
- Educate and demonstrate about farming and agricultural practices

23

24 Environmental

25

- Efficient use of natural resources – land, water and air
- Ensuring adequate habitat for native plants and wildlife
- Research to enhance cropping and livestock systems

28

29 Economic

30

- Farmers should have the opportunity to earn a reasonable living
- Producing abundant, safe and healthy food
- Flexibility to change farming systems to meet market place demands

33

34 These three goals can be achieved by developing an ongoing cooperative relationship between farmers and
35 consumers through use of adaptive management techniques to resolve environmental, social and economic issues.

36

37 We support certified third party audits of farms for animal care practices and land conservation practices to ensure
38 market access and instill consumer confidence.

39

40 The third-party audit information collected becomes the sole proprietary property of the farmer and audit
41 information should be released only as aggregated data.

42

43 **NATURAL RESOURCES & THE ENVIRONMENT**

44 **Ag Chemicals** – We oppose a complete ban on the use of any agricultural chemical or drug unless it can be
45 demonstrated positively by prolonged and responsible research that use of a product represents a clear and present
46 danger to health or that its use would seriously jeopardize our environment. Wisconsin pesticide and herbicide
47 registrations and regulations should not be more restrictive than federal standards.

48

49 We support a process by which atrazine restricted areas can be repealed.

50

51 We support DATCP's current procedures for testing and license renewal for the Pesticide Certification and Training
52 program.

53

54 We support that any new atrazine prohibition area in the state come out of a recommendation of the state atrazine
55 advisory council before DATCP can proceed in the rule making process to add these new areas.

56

57 We support the original intent of the Agrichemical Management Fund and when necessary we support utilizing a
58 portion of the fees collected for agriculture research and agriculture education.

59

1 We support phasing out the agricultural chemical clean-up program at DATCP in conjunction with eliminating the
2 fee. Clean-up of approved existing sites should be completed.

3

4 We support the current tonnage fee on fertilizer, but are in favor of distributing more funding to the Wisconsin
5 Fertilizer Research Fund.

6

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

8

9 We support a continuation of the state's Clean Sweep program.

10

11 **Climate Change** – We oppose climate change legislation at the state level that would increase costs to production
12 agriculture.

13

14 This issue needs to be addressed at the national and international levels.

15

16 **Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations** – We oppose lowering the 1,000 animal unit threshold requirement for
17 concentrated animal feeding operations to get a Wisconsin Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit. We
18 support requiring DNR and DATCP to use the federal animal unit calculation method in their rules and regulations.

19

20 **Cost Sharing** – We favor tax incentives and increased cost sharing of pollution abatement practices to encourage their
21 use and to diminish potentially devastating costs.

22

23 **Drainage & Water Law** – We support legislation to revise our laws pertaining to navigable waters to provide less
24 regulation and insure that the riparian rights of landowners are better recognized. We support legislation creating
25 a statutory definition for navigability. Navigability should be defined as a majority of the year and not one day.
26 We believe that farmers should be able to maintain and upgrade farm drainage systems and ditches to protect the
27 productivity of farmland and farmable fields.

28

29 We support regulation with better engineering and enforcement of runoff, from subdivisions and commercial
30 development onto agriculture lands.

31

32 We support allowing drainage districts to maintain ditches in municipalities and on public lands and assess costs
33 accordingly. We need to encourage the state and counties to maintain and support the historic drainage concept.

34

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

37

38 We urge changes that would require municipalities to control storm water runoff to reduce the serious flooding and
39 financial losses this water can cause downstream. We support the inclusion of an appeal process in all storm water
40 management decisions made by municipalities. We urge that municipal drainage holding ponds be fenced and other
41 appropriate precautions be taken to prevent children from being attracted to them.

42

43 Farmland should be exempt from storm water management assessments given their volume of permeable surface.

44

45 We oppose DNR and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services interference with water control and construction of dams,
46 including those on cranberry operations. We urge that aquaculture and cranberries be classified as water dependent
47 by the DNR. We support legislation defining aquaculture as an agricultural activity.

48

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

53

54 Environmental incidents occurring when farmers have complied with accepted guidelines and regulations should be
55 remedied at public expense.

56

57 We support having the forfeitures for violating water quality standards being directed to the Discovery Farms
58 Program.

59

1 We support the concept of credit trading and adaptive management between municipal and industrial dischargers
2 and farmers to reduce phosphorus discharge into surface waters, provided farmers are not held liable for non-point
3 sources out of their control.

4
5 **Forest Cropland** – We support a fee payable to townships to offset the costs of providing fire protection and other
6 services. We support having the managed forest program only offer contracts to land currently listed by the USDA
7 Farm Service Agency as forestland. Cropland planted to trees should not be eligible for tax relief under the Managed
8 Forest Law. We urge greater effort by DNR to enforce compliance with the management contracts entered into under
9 the Managed Forest Law. We support eliminating the cutting permit requirement for timber products.

10
11 **Groundwater** – There is a need for increased monitoring, research and education relating to groundwater problems.
12 We believe that the present law regarding the installation of high capacity wells serving municipalities should be
13 amended to require that there be no adverse impact on the quality and supply of other local wells.

14
15 We oppose defining multiple small wells located on contiguous land being classified as a high capacity well.

16
17 We support grandfathering in existing high capacity wells under the laws in which they were installed or upgraded
18 including:

- 19 • Renewal of existing well permits
- 20 • Any existing well permit transfers with the sale of the land
- 21 • Any reconstruction or repair of an existing well
- 22 • Ability to replace a well if there is nominal movement from the original well location

23
24 In areas where groundwater quality is an issue, we support DNR establishing groundwater management areas.
25 We support allowing DNR to regulate usage of water in a groundwater management area in consultation with
26 an approval from a local advisory committee comprised of representatives from agriculture, industry and
27 municipalities.

28
29 We support requiring high capacity well permits to be processed within 60 days.

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

33
34 We oppose regulating agricultural crops as an invasive species.

35
36 **Liability** – We believe that the unknowing buyer of property should not be held liable for pollution caused by prior
37 owners. When materials were legally disposed of in earlier years and are now found to be hazardous the previous
38 owners should not be held liable.

39
40 **Livestock Siting** – We support statewide uniform standards for livestock operations rather than individual county
41 ordinances. Livestock siting regulations should not be more restrictive than the state’s nonpoint standards. We
42 support the use of scientifically proven best management practices to mitigate odor and address air emissions from
43 livestock operations. We support reverse setbacks as a part of the state’s livestock siting standards.

44
45 We support DATCP as the sole entity to provide the health assessment for livestock siting operations.

46
47 **Nonpoint** – Nonpoint pollution control efforts should be practical, scientifically-based best management practices,
48 rather than the lowest cost practices, and have adequate cost sharing in order for farmers to economically implement
49 any required practices, including compensation for lost opportunity costs.

50
51 We support conservation credit as part of the non-point program. We oppose any regulation that requires
52 landowners to give an easement for public access in order to participate. We support allowing temporary manure
53 stacking when weather conditions prevent spreading on eligible land.

54
55 Any new nonpoint source pollution regulations should provide 70 percent funding for the cost incurred by farmers
56 to implement these new regulations. Cost sharing should be provided if feed leachate runoff containment is required.
57 We also support adequate funding to local units of government to implement the nonpoint program, provided that
58 local regulations do not exceed state standards.

1 We support allowing regional DNR offices to have short form authority to quickly permit Land Conservation
2 Department and USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) cost-share projects.

3
4 We support requiring NRCS, DNR, DATCP and County Land Conservation Departments to coordinate with
5 each other to utilize resources more effectively to serve farmers. We support requiring program consistency and
6 implementation by County Land Conservation Departments in order to prioritize local programs of importance.
7 We support maintaining base funding for County Land Conservation Departments in order for them to implement
8 programs. Any additional funding should go to counties as competitive grants for priority projects.

9
10 We oppose the dumping of raw sewage by municipalities into lakes and waterways. We support requiring urban and
11 suburban lands to meet similar nonpoint standards as agricultural lands.

12
13 Snow containing road salt should be disposed of at least 300 feet from streams and 1,000 feet from lakes.

14
15 **Noxious Weeds** – We support mandatory enforcement of noxious weed laws, on Conservation Reserve Program
16 lands, and land owned by lending institutions, absentee landowners and the government including town, county and
17 state road right-of-ways. We support the inclusion of multi-flora roses, purple loosestrife, European buckthorn, and
18 wild parsnip on the state’s noxious weed list. Further, we support the creation of programs that would pay farmers to
19 eradicate it.

20
21 **Nutrient Management Plans** – We support allowing farmers to write their own nutrient management plans.

22
23 We support establishing a tiered Nutrient Management program. Nutrient Management planning needs to be
24 simplified in order to reduce paperwork. Nutrient Management plan updates should only have to be submitted once
25 every four years.

26
27 Nutrient Management Plans (NMP) should be exempt from the open records law.

28
29 We need federal, state and county agencies to be consistent and uniform in their application. We support an increase
30 in funding to assist producers in writing the nutrient management plan.

31
32 We support increased phosphate and potash levels for nutrient management planning due to higher yields and the
33 ability of hybrids to better utilize these nutrients.

34
35 **Nutrient Management Regulations** – We support reasonable state laws and regulations governing manure handling
36 and runoff problems with appropriate consequences for those who disregard them. We oppose a ban on the winter
37 spreading of manure. Winter manure applications should be based on a farmer’s nutrient management plan. We
38 support requiring municipal and industrial sludge applications to be at the nutrient needs of the crop rotation. (i.e.
39 The same as standards for livestock manure applications.)

40
41 We oppose towns and counties imposing stricter requirements than state standards without relevant scientific
42 research.

43
44 We support allowing manure to be applied by any application methods as long as rates and timing are in compliance
45 with a nutrient management plan.

46
47 Due to variations in karst areas in Wisconsin, we oppose a blanket regulation that would cover the entire state.
48 Regulations should be specific to individual areas affected.

49
50 We are in favor of developing technical standards for the irrigation of manure and processed waste water.

51
52 **Recycling** – We strongly support more recycling. We urge that landowners be allowed to burn non-recyclable
53 resources on their property.

54
55 We support stricter enforcement of our current litter laws to reduce the losses incurred by farmers due to damaged
56 equipment and injury to livestock.

57
58 **Wetlands** – We believe that a consistent set of definitions and guidelines need to be adopted for all wetlands. Further,
59 wetlands that have been farmed should be allowed to remain in agricultural production.

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

4
5 We urge that county regulations covering wetlands, flood plains and navigable streams be consistent with state
6 regulations.

7
8 We encourage DNR to allow removal of silt and sediment from streambeds through a quick and simple approval
9 process.

10
11 We support farmer led soil and water quality initiatives.

12 13 **TAXATION**

14 **Assessment** – We support use value assessment of agricultural land. We recommend that land dedicated to
15 conservation practices (i.e. wind breaks, buffer strips, etc.) or programs be assessed as farmland under use value. We
16 support the 50 percent prorated assessment of undeveloped land and agricultural forestland.

17
18 We oppose county or regional assessors.

19
20 **Capital Gains** – We support elimination of the state capital gains tax on the sale of a farm. We support allowing
21 a taxpayer to defer taxes from the sale of agricultural property and machinery by investing the proceeds into a
22 retirement account with taxes due at withdrawal.

23
24 **Depreciation** – We support adopting federal depreciation laws as part of state tax laws.

25
26 **Estate Tax** – We oppose a state estate tax.

27
28 **Fees** – We oppose the indexing of fees.

29
30 **Fuel Tax** – We support the continuation of the state fuel tax exemption for agricultural purposes.

31
32 We recognize the need to increase transportation funds to ensure we have an adequate transportation infrastructure.
33 A significant portion of the new funding needs to be allocated to local roads and bridges. Thus, we support a
34 combination of, but not limited to:

- 35
- 36 • Raising:
 - 37 ○ Fuel Tax
 - 38 ○ Vehicle Registration Fees
 - 39 ○ Farm Truck Registration Fees
 - 40 ○ Environmental Fee (PECFA)
 - 41 • Establishing:
 - 42 ○ Local Sales Tax
 - 43 ○ Tolling
 - 44 ○ New Vehicle Tax
- 45

46 **Income Taxes** – We support incorporating federal income tax deductions into Wisconsin income tax laws.

47
48 **Lapses** – We believe that when a fee or state tax is collected for a specific purpose that fund should not be transferred
49 or raided for other uses.

50
51 **Local Fees** – We oppose counties implementing a general tax or fee on farmers or farmland to pay for county land
52 conservation department programs or other county programs.

53
54 **Lottery Tax Credits** – We support reinstatement of the Farmland Tax Relief Credit.

55
56 **Property Taxes** – We support continuation of two-thirds state funding for local school costs. We support the present
57 system of semi-annual or annual payment of property taxes. We urge that all machinery and equipment on farms be
58 exempt from taxation.

1 **Sales Tax Exemption** – We support sales tax exemptions on items and services used directly in farming operations.

2

3 We support allowing counties to raise the sales tax by an additional 0.5% with funds being used for county and
4 township roads. The money should be distributed on a percentage rate based on road miles between counties and
5 townships.

6

7 **Shared Revenues** – We support having shared revenues distributed as equally as possible between towns, villages
8 and cities.

9

10 **Special Assessments** – We support extending current sewer and water assessment protection provisions for
11 farmland located within towns to farmland located within cities and villages. We also support expanding this
12 protection to include unwanted road improvements.

13

14 We oppose any municipality or county having the ability to levy a special assessment on agricultural property for
15 constructing any public work or improvement.

16

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

19

20 We support limiting the amount of property taxes that can be levied by all units of government. We support
21 maintaining revenue limits. We recommend that school-spending limits should not be decreased if a school does not
22 spend up to its limits in any year. We oppose exceeding levy limits, except by referendum.

23

24 **Tax Exempt Real Estate** – We urge that all tax-exempt real estate at least be required to make a payment for
25 municipal services (i.e. police, fire, etc.). Further, we recommend that property owned by the state and federal
26 government, non-profit organizations, federal trust lands and other revenue producing property pay their full share
27 of the local property tax.

28

29 **Technical College System** – We support a portion of property taxes to be used for funding the Wisconsin Technical
30 Colleges.

31

32 **TRANSPORTATION**

33 **Highways** – We urge that highway user taxes and sales taxes collected on over-the-road vehicles be used only for
34 highway construction and maintenance purposes. We support an increase in local road funding.

35

36 We support limiting debt service payments from the transportation fund to 15% of expenditures. We recommend that
37 any additional sources of revenue for transportation are designated to local municipalities for infrastructure projects.

38

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

42

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

44

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

47

48 We urge the DOT to treat agricultural land equal to wetlands when obtaining land for the building of roads. The
49 same degree of effort should be used in preserving agriculture land as is used in preserving wetlands.

50

51 If a county does not have an ordinance to charge extra fees for maintenance of a road during an emergency situation,
52 a landowner should not be required to pay for emergency road maintenance.

53

54 Roundabouts should be designed to accommodate large trucks, semis and farm equipment.

55

56 We support less control by the DNR in road construction projects which would allow projects to be completed in a
57 timely and reasonable manner.

58

59

1 We support all oversized and weight penalties assessed on vehicles on town roads in a township should go back to
2 that township.
3

4 We propose that when engineering a road, the state and local level of governments should install culverts to assist in
5 transporting manure to reduce traffic on roads.
6

7 We support allowing local government to permit the piping of manure in road right-of-ways.
8

9 We support requiring the DNR to maintain local roads adjacent and through DNR owned land.
10

11 **Implements of Husbandry (IOH)** – We oppose the registration of IOH or the licensing of their operators. We
12 encourage the use of turn signals on farm implements.
13

14 We recommend a consistent definition of IOH to be used in all state statutes.
15

16 We support updating state laws and DOT regulations to remove conflicting lighting requirements for agricultural
17 vehicles. We support uniform manufacturing requirements for lighting and visibility markings on certain agricultural
18 vehicles and IOH.
19

20 We support the ability to operate or transport IOH of unlimited width on all roads. If an IOH is over 22 feet in width
21 an escort vehicle with flashing hazards activated should be required.
22

23 **License** – We support under documented workers being able to obtain a provisional driver’s license with the
24 completion of an instructional course.
25

26 **Railroads** – We support a viable rail system in Wisconsin for the shipment of agricultural products. We encourage
27 the trucking and railroad industry to work together to improve the efficiency of product movement.
28

29 We oppose granting a government agency the right of first refusal to buy abandoned right-of-way or any other land.
30 Their abandoned right-of-ways should revert back to the present landowners. When railroads are abandoned, the
31 party taking them over should have to live up to the same responsibilities as the railroad, such as weed control and
32 fence maintenance.
33

34 We oppose closing down town roads and private access roads for the railroad’s benefit.
35

36 We urge that user fees and not public money primarily fund alternative forms of public transportation, such as light
37 rail.
38

39 **Safety** – We support using higher quality reflective paint in highway markings to improve visibility. We support
40 the installation of a backup warning device system on all commercial milk, cattle, feed and other trucks making farm
41 pickups or deliveries.
42

43 We urge that highway departments regularly maintain highway right-of-ways to reduce weed and brush problems
44 and improve highway safety.
45

46 We support increased education for law enforcement agents, as well as the general public, in regard to slow moving
47 vehicles and the standard Slow Moving Vehicle signs that are required by law. We support stronger enforcement of
48 this law.
49

50 We support expanding the section, which addresses agricultural issues, to the driver’s education training manual
51 published by the Wisconsin DOT.
52

53 We support requiring a person to demonstrate knowledge of hand signals in order to pass a driver’s license test or
54 obtain their renewal.
55

56 We support a requirement that a highly visible flag be displayed on ATVs that are operated on public roads when the
57 road is being used for an ATV trail route.
58

59 We support a requirement that bicyclists be more visible when traveling on public highways.

1 We support requiring any bicycle rally or event with 15 or more bicycles be forced to get a permit to help pay for law
2 enforcement.

3
4 We support requiring a non-probationary driver's license to operate any agricultural equipment categorized as an
5 Agricultural Commercial Motor Vehicle (Ag CMV).

6
7 We support requiring all animal drawn vehicles to have a slow moving vehicle sign and proper lighting on public
8 roads.

9
10 **Vehicle Length** – All state constructed or funded highways should be open to all trucks meeting state length and
11 weight limitations.

12
13 **Vehicle Regulations** – We support excluding farm pickup trucks, in combination with a trailer or IOH, over 26,000 lbs,
14 from the DOT commercial vehicle regulations.

15
16 We support having the DOT educate its enforcement agents of the rules and regulations governing farm trucks and that
17 the same information is made available to farm truck owners.

18
19
20 ATVs, or snowmobiles and lightweight utility vehicles that are used exclusively for agricultural purposes should be
21 exempt from registration and license fees.

22
23 We encourage better enforcement of current regulations governing mud flaps and covered loads on commercial
24 vehicles to reduce incidents of gravel or other debris from these vehicles damaging following vehicles.

25
26 All state-owned vehicles should be subject to the same DOT requirements as privately owned vehicles.

27
28 We support requiring a sign on the back of school buses indicating that they stop at railroad crossings.

29
30 We demand notification from the DOT on new driver requirements, such as health cards with renewal notices.

31
32 **Vehicle Weight** – We support increasing truck weight limits to 98,000 pounds on six axles.

33
34 We support increasing road weight limits for IOH to 23,000 pounds for axle weights and 92,000 pounds gross vehicle
35 weight.

36
37 We support category B self-propelled IOH being exempt from axle weight requirements.





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