

STATE AND LOCAL AFFAIRS

Purpose of Farm Bureau Federation

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(hereinafter referred to as Farm Bureau)

Farm Bureau is a free, independent, nongovernmental, voluntary organization of American farm and ranch families united for the purpose of analyzing their problems and formulating action to achieve educational improvement, economic opportunity, and social advancement, thereby promoting the growth of our country and the quality of our national life. Farm Bureau is local, national, and international in its scope and influence and is nonpartisan, non-sectarian, and nonsecret in character.

Farm Bureau and Its Aims

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1. Farm Bureau is a statewide voluntary organization of farm families and individuals interested and involved in the agricultural economy. Its organization specifically represents the various segments of the agricultural industry.
2. Its main purpose is to identify, analyze, and propose solutions for farm problems at local, state, and national levels. In union, it seeks the strength and joint promotion of the well-being of farm people, of agriculture as a whole, and of each commodity segment, in particular.
3. Among Farm Bureau's specific aims are the following:
 - (a) The furtherance of democratic processes of home rule and individual freedom and rights.
 - (b) The reflection and transmission of farmers' basic ideals of government and of their views of local, state, and national policies to both farm and nonfarm groups.
 - (c) The provision of a two-way channel for the promotion of broader understanding of political, economic, and, specifically, agricultural issues and techniques.
 - (d) The provision for developing, centralizing, and giving effect to Farm Bureau policy.
 - (e) The attainment of higher net income for the farmer and the general improvement of his standard of living.
 - (f) The enlargement of opportunity for youth.
 - (g) The provision of opportunity for the development of farm and civic leadership.
 - (h) The development of full member responsibility in Farm Bureau and public policy.
4. Farm Bureau's Philosophy of Government
 - (a) We believe in a constitutional government guaranteeing American citizens freedom and liberty, including freedom of speech, press, religious worship, peaceful assembly, the right to own property, and freedom from unwarranted search or seizure.
 - (b) We protest federal preemption of decision by the federal government in state legislative fields where state action is not prohibited by federal statutes.
 - (c) We believe that the Legislative, Judicial, and Executive Departments of the federal government must be kept separate as the Founding Fathers intended. We deplore encroachment on, or transfer of, the traditional powers from any branch of the government to the other.
 - (d) We believe in our competitive system in which supply and demand are primary determinants of prices in the marketplace.
 - (e) We further believe that the philosophy of our government must continue to embody the rights of a citizen to build and accumulate assets during his lifetime and to transfer to his family, title to such assets at his death, free from unwarranted and excessive federal and state levies, such as inheritance taxes and other taxes and assessments. We believe such rights of an American citizen are guaranteed by the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the United States.
 - (f) We believe that thriftiness, ability, industriousness, and maximum productivity are vital factors in sustaining the unequalled standard of living of American citizens.
 - (g) We further believe that candidates for public office should make their views known on issues which affect the future of the livelihood of their constituents.
 - (h) We believe that individuals are responsible for their own acts so they also have a responsibility to speak for themselves and their interests through effective organizations of their own creation and choice.
5. Membership Participation

An active, participating, informed membership is the keystone of an effective Farm Bureau. Projects and programs in which all membership can take part should be developed by the membership, based on the needs, ideas, interests, and problems of farm families, and designed to help achieve educational improvement, economic opportunity, and social advancement.

Such a program of transmitting farmers' ideas into projects of action demands trained well-equipped, dedicated, voluntary leadership. To equip and motivate this leadership requires a program of leadership training and recognition.
6. Policy Development and Implementation
 - (a) Farm Bureau should continue to improve the procedure necessary to develop policies and recommendations in order that more members can take part in building sound policies. We urge parish Farm Bureaus to place more emphasis on the resolutions process.
 - (b) The basic objective of policy implementation is to win support for Farm Bureau policies by our members and the general public alike. The key to this objective lies in continuous effort by parish Farm Bureaus to accomplish this purpose.

- (c) We urge development of, and participation in, active commodity committees on the state and parish levels.

Marketing

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1. Trade Development and Marketing Association
 - (a) The importance of an expanded marketing program to serve the needs of farmers and ranchers has become apparent not only for the best interest of farmers, but also for the best interest of our entire national economy.
 - (b) We support a positive program that would result in farmers operating their own voluntary marketing associations rather than having the government or others assume this responsibility.
 - (c) We recommend continued study of marketing problems. When feasible ways are found to aid the members in solving marketing problems, we recommend that the procedures be implemented through the Farm Bureau Marketing Association.
 - (d) We recommend that the State Board – when the need arises – expand the services of the Marketing Association at the request of interested commodity groups. The objectives of the Association will be:
 - (1) To expand markets for members.
 - (2) To improve the bargaining power of farmers and ranchers.
 - (3) To advise growers on economic facts and conditions affecting marketing.
 - (4) To furnish growers with pertinent information concerning the supply-and-demand situation for agricultural products.
 - (e) We further recommend that membership in the Marketing Association be limited to members of Farm Bureau.
2. Use of Marketing Orders

We support marketing orders as an adequate method of providing price protection for farmers. However, we oppose establishment of monopolies in the marketing, grading, transporting, storing, or processing of agricultural products.
3. Agricultural Products
 - (a) We support the establishment of processing and marketing facilities where feasible.
 - (b) We request that all agricultural products entering the state be subject to the same inspections as produce grown in Louisiana and urge that these provisions be enforced.
 - (c) We recommend that Farm Bureau work with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF) to develop a promotional program using radio, television, newspapers, displays, and road signs to encourage the public, restaurants, superstores, and other businesses to buy Louisiana-grown products with an emphasis on quality rather than price.
 - (d) We urge Louisiana educational facilities to give Louisiana food producers and processors an opportunity to bid on food service contracts.
4. Market Information
 - (a) We support a communication system between grain and livestock farmers to provide information to Louisiana farmers on the availability of Louisiana-grown grain, hay, and cottonseed.
 - (b) We oppose prison farms selling their produce to local markets in direct competition with fruit and vegetable farmers throughout the state.
 - (c) We support the rights of native wineries to sell their products wholesale and retail in Louisiana.

Research and Extension

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1. Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service (Extension Service)
 - (a) To further the cooperative effort between Farm Bureau and the Extension Service, we urge that parish Farm Bureaus actively support and participate in the full implementation of parish extension advisory committees and other areas of mutual benefit.
 - (b) We urge local Farm Bureaus to encourage police juries or parish councils and school board to continue to increase financial support for the Extension Service, the vocational agricultural program, and other needed local agricultural programs.
 - (c) We urge support of Extension Service leadership at all levels to obtain adequate funding of this vital service, with particular emphasis on increased local support.
 - (d) We urge that no further funding cuts be made on the federal, state, and local levels affecting the research and educational purposes of the Extension Service.
 - (e) We urge that when funds are available, research and extension personnel be eligible for merit salary increases.
 - (f) We recommend full funding for the LSU Ag Center (LSUAC) at the July 1, 2008 funding level of the state appropriations and encourage the Governor, state legislators, and the Board of Regents to support and take action to meet this request.
2. Research Work
 - (a) We support adequate appropriations for agricultural research work by the Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station (Experiment Station).
 - (b) We recommend that LSU increase the amount of research on aquaculture. We urge that continued research be done in crawfish farming, marketing, and use of crawfish by-products.
 - (c) We urge the Experiment Station to continue to conduct studies of methods to prevent aflatoxin.

- (d) We recommend that the AgCenter continue its work on controlling and preventing noxious weeds in pasturelands.
 - (e) We urge the Experiment Station to publish research results based upon maximum profit potential, as well as maximum production potential.
 - (f) We urge whatever action necessary to prohibit public funds for agricultural research and grants being used for agricultural research in foreign countries that leads directly to increased competition against U.S. commodities.
 - (g) We urge Farm Bureau to work toward getting the agricultural research stations throughout the state to continue further research to use compost urban waste on all cropland and pastureland to improve the organic matter content of our soils and at the same time promote good will with our city friends who are customers for our farm products.
 - (h) We support measures to expedite soil testing at the soil testing facilities at LSU.
 - (i) We request that the Experiment Station continue its research efforts on pesticides to control external parasites on livestock in Louisiana.
 - (j) We request that the AgCenter develop a Best Management Practice (BMP) conducive to the enhancement of the fire ant population in sugarcane fields.
 - (k) We request that the AgCenter continue its research efforts on the handling of cotton module covers, as well as on modules in the field and at the gin.
 - (l) We urge the State of Louisiana to develop a comprehensive school of veterinary technology.
 - (m) We urge the AgCenter to maintain the position at the Hill Farm Research Station Mastitis Lab and continue mastitis research with special emphasis on statewide monitoring of Mycoplasma mastitis.
 - (n) We urge that research be conducted on the feasibility of a sugar mill establishing an ethanol production facility at its location.
3. Contact Committees
- We realize that maximum utilization of agricultural research funds, facilities, staff, and results have a direct relationship to the adaptability of research findings to farmers' needs. We support contact committees of farmers for all commodities to counsel with research heads and staff regarding present projects, new findings, needed work, and other approaches to expanded and coordinated research. We support new enterprises through research and development.
4. Animal Diseases
- (a) We support the efforts by the LDAF to maintain Louisiana as a brucellosis-free state. We support the practice of calftuberculin vaccination.
 - (b) We urge strict enforcement of the law prohibiting garbage feeding to swine in order to prevent hog cholera and trichinosis.
 - (c) We recommend that Farm Bureau oppose any parish or state ordinance or law that would restrict the sale, distribution, or possession of antirabies vaccine only to licensed veterinarians.
 - (d) We support the EIA regulations developed by the Louisiana Board of Animal Health to eradicate this disease in Louisiana horses.
 - (e) We urge the LDAF to maintain comprehensive programs and policies to protect livestock from foot-and-mouth disease, Scrapie, and BSE (mad cow disease).
 - (f) We urge LDAF to implement regulations that will prevent the introduction of exotic Newcastle disease in Louisiana.
 - (g) The Equine Coggins test has been in effect for 25 years and was very effective in ridding our state of this disease. Therefore, we request that this test be required every five years instead of its present one-year term for equine within the state.

Farm Products and Equipment

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- 1. Agricultural Chemicals
 - (a) We urge the continuation of the program under which the LDAF fairly and impartially tests all farm chemicals and insecticides to determine if they meet the specifications of the manufacturer's label.
 - (b) We recommend that the registration of pesticides for so-called "minor uses," including horticulture crops, be streamlined.
 - (c) We support the enforcement of the law regarding aerial application of pesticides by the LDAF.
 - (d) We request LDAF to take two sealed samples when testing on-farm pesticides: one for the Department's use and the other to be retained by the farmer.
 - (e) We support additional funding from USDA and the LDAF for the Extension Service to conduct Pesticide Applicator Training programs.
 - (f) We support legislation which will relieve farmers of liability for groundwater contamination by fertilizer or farm chemicals provided that state and federal labeling requirements are followed.
 - (g) We support the continuation of a disposal program for outdated pesticides.
 - (h) We urge Farm Bureau to make all efforts to keep all Triazine formulations labeled as they are at the present time.
 - (i) We recommend that the LDAF reevaluate the amount of liability coverage required for commercial pesticide applicators. We also recommend that aerial applicators carry a minimum of \$500,000 of crop liability coverage when applying herbicides.
 - (j) We are opposed to proposed EPA regulations which would establish "zero tolerance" drift for aerial and ground applications of pesticides. These regulations would require the establishment of large buffer zones within fields which could not be protected from pests.

- (k) We request that Farm Bureau work with AFBF regarding educational programs targeted toward the urban community in order to prevent misuse of pesticides and ultimately preserve their use for agricultural purposes.
 - (l) Pesticides are an essential tool of agricultural production. We support reasonable, common sense regulation of their use. We support an expanded program to inform and educate the public on the need for agricultural chemicals and the protection against their misuse.
 - (m) We support the National Association of the State Departments of Agriculture in their efforts to minimize the difficulties imposed on American farmers by the Worker Protection Standards.
 - (n) We oppose any curtailment of the safe and proper use of agricultural chemicals and drugs unless research and scientific data determine that injury to health and well-being would result. We also request reevaluation of previously canceled pesticides based on current scientific data. We urge pesticide companies to pursue registration of products that would address the changing needs for agricultural crop protection.
 - (o) We urge the Louisiana State Police, the Louisiana Department of Motor Vehicles, and all local law enforcement agencies to recognize excavators and dozers owned by federally designated farms and ranches as "farm equipment." Furthermore, for the purposes of movement of said equipment on state highways, the agricultural exemption for CDL licenses and over-width permits shall apply.
 - (p) We support Section 18 approval of BAS 700 to control a resistant strain of sheath blight in rice.
2. Agricultural Seed
- (a) We urge that present laws in seed be enforced and that the facilities of the state seed lab continue to be maintained and upgraded to provide the best possible testing and analysis in the shortest length of time.
 - (b) We recommend that certified seed tags show the germination percentage, official vigor test, date of testing, and crop year. We support a standardized vigor test for bulk seed.
 - (c) We recommend that all certified, registered, and breeder cotton and rice seed show cold test data on the seed tag.
 - (d) We request that it become mandatory that all seed companies list the seed count per bag (unit) of all grains and oil seeds.
 - (e) In order to maintain profitability in agricultural production, we urge the reduction of agricultural technology fees.
3. Food Packaging and Advertising
- (a) We urge the LDAF to enforce existing laws regulating false advertising.
 - (b) We support legislation and enforcement which would require all retail outlets for beef and beef products to print on the package that the product is made from imported beef. Restaurants that use imported meat and meat products should display a notice on each menu or at each ordering point to that effect.
 - (c) We recommend that when the term "domestic beef" is used in a description of beef, the amount of U.S. meat be a minimum of 100%.
4. Production Practices
- We support a program through the Farm Services Agency (FSA) for winter cover crops to help prevent erosion to croplands and to provide winter grazing for livestock.
- We request that LFBF Board of Directors request legislation authorizing the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry to be the state entity to implement policies on care and handling of livestock, equine, and poultry and prohibiting political subdivisions from enacting or enforcing ordinances or regulations that are more restrictive than rules promulgated by the Department. Furthermore, ordinances or regulations by municipalities pertaining to land use or to human health or safety shall not be considered to constitute livestock, equine, and poultry care and handling.
5. Bulk Fuel Storage
- We recommend that Farm Bureau monitor regulations and fees imposed on fuel storage tanks by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and EPA and oppose additional fees and regulations placed on them.
6. Farm Implement Dealerships
- We support the practice of dealer-owned and operated implement stores and recommend this be continued whenever possible. Any hearings held on manufacturer-owned implement stores should be monitored.
7. Bulk Feed Samples
- We recommend that the LDAF increase the number of bulk feed samples taken for testing to prevent contaminated feeds from being fed to livestock.
8. Diesel Fuel Dye
- We request an alternative method other than dye be used to differentiate diesel fuel used in off-road and farm equipment.
9. Horse Rendering Plants
- We urge Congress to pass legislation to allow horses to be processed at rendering plants in the United States.
10. Port Security
- We request that LFBF work with the U.S. ports in Louisiana that handle agricultural commodities to establish Port Security Plans that allow non-TWIC card drivers to enter the port to deliver commodities with an escort or by the driver wearing a vest for visual identification and monitoring while in the port.

1. Rights-of-Way Problems

The rights of landowners are often abused by the agencies that have the right of expropriation in obtaining land for various purposes. More consideration should be given in the future to preserving precious farmland.

- (a) We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to monitor state expropriation laws and recommend changes in them when necessary to protect landowners and tenants. The law should mandate that authorities with expropriation powers work with landowners by providing adequate notice and maintaining the rights-of-way.
- (b) We recommend that all new pipelines be placed and existing pipelines be maintained at least four feet below the surface and marked as to their location. We also recommend that in pipeline construction through agricultural and wetland areas, equal consideration be given to the preservation of agricultural land as well as wetlands. We also recommend that underground telephone lines be placed and maintained at least four feet below the surface. Landowners and/or farmers should not be liable for costs of repair if telephone lines are laid at depths of less than four feet. We recommend that any utility or pipeline be buried below the engineered depth of a drainage ditch a minimum of five feet.
- (c) We support the passage of new laws which prohibit the granting to third parties of any rights to utilize portions of an existing easement, rights-of-way, or servitude for purposes not provided for or intended to be used in connection with the specific granting language of an easement, rights-of-way, or servitude agreement.
- (d) We support regulations which would prohibit the granting of utility servitudes, easements, or rights-of-way by local governing authorities to nonpublic entities.
- (e) We oppose FCC regulations that give them the power to overrule local and state zoning laws regarding the placement of tall towers.
- (f) We request the Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) to do a better job of maintaining the rights-of-way of interstate highways and request that they conform with the state of Louisiana beautification laws on all highways.
- (g) We urge the State Board to activate a study committee as needed to work with representatives from DOTD, electric, telephone, and water utilities and other interested parties to improve maintenance of rights-of-way. The committee's objectives should include improved highway visibility, harvest of timber on the rights-of-way, reduce power outages, return land to owner as rights-of-way are changed, guidelines for loggers and landowners, and easier access to all utilities for maintenance.
- (h) We support legislation which would require all pipeline owners and utilities to maintain a GPS identification and location system to ensure accurate location of lines to better facilitate the Louisiana One Call system used by farmers. In the case of lines that are dangerous if damaged, the utility representatives should be onsite during the digging operation.
- (i) We recommend that LFBF work to establish requirements that farmers be paid the full value for crops damaged or destroyed by any company with right of way rights on a farmer's crop land.
- (j) We recommend that a study committee be appointed to look into an Agricultural Impact Mitigation Agreement for utilities and pipelines.

2. Rights-of-Way Easement

- (a) Easement rights-of-way obtained by public or private sectors shall not be committed to any new or additional purpose either during their original usage or after abandonment without consent of the owner of the land underlying the easement.
- (b) We oppose federal legislation that would deny or postpone the reversionary property rights or interests of underlying or adjacent property owners to railroad, utility, or road rights-of-way that are no longer being used for the purpose for which the rights-of-way were granted.
- (c) We oppose any legislation that will permit utility rights-of-way, including railroad rights-of-way, to be used for recreational purposes without permission of adjoining landowners.
- (d) We request that Union Pacific and other railroads not be allowed to close crossings if the crossing is the only access a landowner has to his property or if it would adversely affect the farm operator.
- (e) We request that Farm Bureau encourage Union Pacific and other railroads to clean and maintain the culverts under their tracks so that drainage is not impeded.
- (f) We support regulation of railroad crossings by the PSC.
- (g) Farmers and landowners should not be liable for accidents at railroad crossings on their property and should not be required to maintain the railroad right-of-way adjacent to crossings on their property.
- (h) We support the Commissioner of Agriculture having the authority to determine if closed, private railroad crossings should be reopened.

3. Rails to Trails

We oppose provisions of the National Trail System Act which permit rail property which is no longer being used for rail service or when rail use is discontinued to be donated, sold, and/or used for trails or other recreational purposes. When a railroad is abandoned, the rights-of-way should be returned or sold to the adjacent property owners.

We support the concept of rail banking to preserve rights-of-way for future use, provided authorizing legislation accomplishes the following:

- (a) Require railroads to provide timely personal notice to each landowner before each proposed abandonment.
- (b) Require railroads to reveal to each landowner before abandonment the full and complete legal basis on which the railroad has claimed its right to occupy the corridor. If the railroad's right is less than fee simple ownership, the railroad should be required to disclose to each landowner that its occupancy right will be extinguished upon abandonment.
- (c) Permit and encourage every landowner to participate in the abandonment proceeding and to offer reasons for or against rail banking or trail use.
- (d) Permit rail banking without interim trail use, and permit landowners to retain abandoned railroad corridors for nonrail uses that will preserve the opportunity for restored rail use in the future.
- (e) Require the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to consider all comments by landowners, to make specific findings concerning the effects of proposed interim trail use on the safety, health, security, and privacy interests of landowners and neighboring residents, and, based thereon, to make a determination of suitability for trail use before issuing a Certificate of Interim Trail Use (CITU) or a Notice of Interim Trail Use (NITU).
- (f) Require the STB to impose conditions to protect the safety, health, security, and privacy interests of landowners where necessary or appropriate before issuing a CITU or a NITU.
- (g) Create a predictable, objective, bright-line standard that abandonment is deemed to be consummated no later than nine months after issuance of authority to abandon by STB.
- (h) Require STB to supervise, monitor, and enforce its orders and conditions on rail banked land or to empower state and local governments to do so without preemption by federal authorities.
- (i) Create a procedure for reinstatement of rail service on rail banked corridors.
- (j) Provide a clear and simple procedure to compensate landowners for their interest in land that is taken as a result of rail banking order.

If not repealed altogether, the National Trails System Act should be amended to allow only those railroad rights-of-way which have a realistic probability of being used again for a railroad to be approved for interim use as recreational trails. The National Trails Act should be amended to require:

- (a) A locally elected governmental entity to assume responsibility for the project and hold public hearings outlining a plan for long-term maintenance. There should be input from citizens and contiguous landowners before the property is transferred to any group.
- (b) The entity receiving certification for trail use of a rail corridor to be held responsible for liability, rights-of-way fencing, taxes, control of noxious weeds, maintenance of the rights-of-way, and other such costs which were required of the railroad and should also be responsible for compensating the owners of the rights-of-way for use of the property easement.
- (c) That railroads provide timely personal notice to each landowner before each proposed abandonment.
- (d) That railroads reveal to each landowner, before abandonment, the full and complete legal basis on which the railroad has claimed its right to occupy the corridor. If the railroad's right is less than fee simple ownership, the railroad should be required to disclose to each landowner that its occupancy right will be extinguished upon abandonment. In cases where the railroad owns the rights-of-way in fee simple, however, selling to adjoining landowners is appropriate and proper.
- (e) Opportunity for every landowner to participate in the abandonment proceeding and to offer reasons for or against rail banking or trail use.
- (f) Opportunity for rail banking without interim trail use. Landowners should be allowed to retain railroad corridors for nonrail uses that will preserve the opportunity for restored rail use in the future.
- (g) The STB to consider all comments by landowners, to make specific findings concerning the effects of proposed interim trail use on the safety, health, security, and privacy interests of landowners and neighboring residents and, based thereon, to make a determination of suitability for trail use before issuing a CITU or a NITU.
- (h) Procedures granting the STB authority to accept or reject rail banking agreements entered into between the railroad and trail sponsor.
- (i) Local governing body approval of the recreational trail project before the STB can accept the rail-banking agreement between the railroad and the trail sponsor.
- (j) The STB to impose conditions to protect the safety, health, security, and privacy interests of landowners, where necessary or appropriate, before issuing a CITU or a NITU.
- (k) Creation of a predictable, objective, bright-line standard that abandonment is deemed to be consummated no later than nine months after issuance of authority to abandon by STB.
- (l) The STB to supervise, monitor, and enforce its orders and conditions on rail-banked land or to empower state and local governments to do so without preemption by federal authorities.
- (m) Creation of a procedure for reinstatement of rail service on rail-banked corridors.
- (n) A clear and simple procedure to compensate landowners for their interests in land that is taken as a result of a rail banking order.
- (o) We urge Farm Bureau to sponsor legislation to regulate any recreational trail developed under the National Trails Act. The regulations governing these trails must ensure the property rights of landowners and ensure a safe and useful trail. We suggest that Farm Bureau use the Kansas Farm Bureau Recreational Trails Act as a guide for our legislation.

- (p) We urge that if the proposed bike path is built along the Mississippi River levee from Baton Rouge to New Orleans that it is at the bottom of the levee.
4. Federal, State, and Parish Roads
- (a) Farm Bureau should urge state officials, including local senators and representatives, to obtain funding for the building, overlaying, and other maintenance needed on state roads.
- (b) We recommend that when parish and state roads are updated and widened, adequate consideration be given to drainage. We also support additional funding for the parish road fund.
- (c) We urge the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development to prioritize funds for road and highway development.
- (d) We request the PSC to require area railroad companies to properly maintain drainage culverts in order to comply with state and local drainage programs.
- (e) We request DOTD to continue to paint double yellow lines at intersections of state and parish roads and to place caution lights where needed. We also encourage DOTD and local governments to maintain all road signs and request them to place the signs far enough back on the rights-of-way to facilitate safe movement of farm equipment. White lines should be painted on the edge of the travel lane as a safety precaution.
- (f) We urge police juries, parish councils, levee boards, and DOTD to do a better job of supervising roadwork crews in order to better maintain highways and parish roads, especially farm-to-market roads.
- (g) We recommend that DOTD use materials equal in quality for the construction of both road surfaces and shoulders to insure safety on our state roads.
- (h) We recommend that private individuals be allowed to utilize the forages along the state and federal highways for hay.
- (i) We urge DOTD to post caution signs along those highways highly used by farm machinery.
- (j) We recommend that if Highway 90 becomes part of Interstate 49, special consideration should be made to allow farm implements to cross the Wax Lake outlet bridge.
- (k) We request that frontage (service) roads be constructed from Morgan City to Lafayette.
- (l) We request that left-turn lanes be constructed on Highway 90 between Morgan City and Lafayette.
- (m) We urge DOTD to construct a permanent bridge over Bayou Plaquemine on Louisiana Highway 91 north of Estherwood.
- (n) In order to increase safety on Highway 90, we request that DOTD reestablish the 55-mph speed limit between Morgan City and Lafayette.
- (o) We urge that harvest-season permits allowing maximum weight limits of 100,000 pounds be acquired for all commodities on federal highways.
- (p) We support the continued availability of 100,000-pound permits for farm trucks.
- (q) We recommend informing our membership on the current federal highway use tax provisions as they apply to agriculture. This should be done through the *Louisiana Farm Bureau News*, newsletters, and letters to parish presidents.
- (r) We request that the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development trim tree limbs overhanging highways in order to facilitate the transport of large farm equipment.
- (s) We urge DOTD to place a traffic signal at the intersection of Highway 402 and Highway 1.
- (t) We support the extension of Highway 70 South on the east side of Bayou Lafourche parallel to Highway 308.
5. Telephone Service
- (a) We urge the Public Service Commission (PSC) to support local parish Farm Bureaus' efforts to reduce the number of telephone exchanges within parishes in order to improve local service.
- (b) We recommend that the dead zones experienced by cellular phone users be eliminated.
- (c) We support continued action by the Louisiana Public Service Commission to modernize Louisiana's telecommunications rules to further incentivize private investment in advanced technologies supporting economic development in all areas of the state.

Electric Companies

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1. We oppose the rate structure used by electric companies whereby customers pay demand charges on agricultural facilities for 12 months of the year when the facilities may actually be used only one to three months of the year. We request that LFBF work with the Louisiana Public Service Commission (PSC) to restructure electricity rates in an effort to maintain affordable rates for Louisiana agriculture and work to eliminate demand charges currently charged to higher users of electricity within Louisiana agriculture.
2. We oppose Louisiana PSC rate increases that recoup the speculative ventures normally financed by stockholders, such as nuclear plants.
3. We request that utility companies work with farmers to insure that farm equipment can be moved without disturbing the utility line.
4. We urge that Farm Bureau seek the cooperation and support of the utility companies in upgrading the quality and quantity of service in rural areas.
5. We support open board meetings to the membership of each respective rural electric cooperative, notification and public hearings prior to any rate change, and each cooperative having the option to be regulated by its respective board of directors or the PSC, subject to the conditions set forth in the Act.
6. We support the prevention of duplication of electric service within 300 feet of existing utility power lines.

7. We support the reenactment by the PSC of the orders and rules which deal with the definition of territory of electric utilities and duplication of electric services.

Taxation and Finance

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1. Agricultural Taxation
- (a) We support maintaining use value taxation of agricultural, horticultural, forest, and marshlands.
 - (b) We believe it to be unfair and inequitable to allow all registered voters to vote in property tax elections, and we should work to correct this situation.
 - (c) We request the reinstatement of exemptions for all agricultural equipment.
 - (d) We urge that LFBF do whatever is necessary to make all leased agricultural equipment and implements used exclusively for production agriculture exempt from property and ad valorem taxes. The exemption of this equipment should be well publicized among producers, tax assessors, the state Department of Taxation, and leasing companies doing business in the state of Louisiana.
 - (e) We recommend that state and local governing bodies include a "sunset" provision in all special-purpose tax legislation which will terminate the tax upon completion of the project.
 - (f) We support the appropriate changes in state law that excludes borrowed capital in computing the corporate franchise tax.
 - (g) We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to study homestead exemption and alternative methods of taxation and that the State Board be given authority to support lowering the homestead exemption if deemed appropriate.
 - (h) We support only those increases in local property taxes that are fair to farm landowners and recommend that the use of such increased revenue be clearly defined and dedicated by a vote of the people.
 - (i) We recommend that the State Board study the possibility of placing a minimum valuation on all property so that the homeowner still maintains some protection and all homeowners make a contribution when they vote on taxes.
 - (j) We oppose state, parish, local, and/or municipal governing authorities from levying taxes or user fees. In addition, we oppose water use taxation. We support landowner riparian rights and defend agriculture's right to use water at no cost.
 - (k) We recommend that Farm Bureau help educate taxpayers concerning "use" tax and penalties for nonpayment of Louisiana sales tax when purchasing from out-of-state dealers.
 - (l) We request Farm Bureau to contact the appropriate government/administration officials to voice our opposition to the current federal and state tax audit process and to pursue a change in the system whereby an individual will be "innocent until proven guilty."
 - (m) We support a sales tax exemption on new and/or used farm equipment that is either leased or rented.
 - (n) We request that Farm Bureau support legislation which would include utility farm vehicles (for example: John Deere Gators, Kawasaki Mules; etc.) in the sales tax exemption definition of farm equipment and allow Farm Bureau staff to seek to further define this exemption legislatively, if necessary.
 - (o) We support the continued implementation of the graduated sales tax exemption on all farm equipment.
 - (p) We request that Farm Bureau support legislation to exempt equipment used for aerial application of chemicals, fertilizer, and seeds from sales tax.
 - (q) We oppose the imposition of franchise taxes on utilities by parish police juries or councils in unincorporated areas.
 - (r) We oppose franchise taxes on cotton gins and cotton warehouses.
 - (r) We urge the Louisiana Department of Revenue to inform fuel distributors that off-road diesel is not subject to state or local sales tax and does not require an exemption certificate.
 - (t) We request legislation if needed to allow local taxing entities to suspend the collection of sales tax on propane and/or natural gas farm equipment using these fuel sources.
 - (u) We urge LFBF work through legislative means to have line "B" of RS 47:305:37 deleted, this would place all parishes under the same eligibilities. (In any parish having a population of more than one hundred twenty thousand persons but less than one hundred forty thousand persons based on the latest Federal decennial census.)
2. We strongly oppose ad valorem taxes at the state level and recommend that this source of tax revenue be reserved for local governing bodies.

Natural Resources

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1. Flood Control
- (a) We support reasonable flood control through coordination among federal and state agencies and private organizations.
 - (b) We oppose the federal takeover of the Atchafalaya Basin and urge that the Agency Management Group adopt a flood control plan which will relieve a flood situation as soon as possible and minimize private property damage.
 - (c) We support retention and consolidation of levee districts as recommended by the 2006 Regular Session of the Legislature. However, we oppose any future consolidation of levee districts.

- (d) We recommend that the mayor and city council for East Baton Rouge Parish develop a more suitable plan for flood control in the parish that occurs from heavy rains and backwater.
- (e) We oppose the construction of the Darlington Reservoir and strongly support the abolishment of the Amite River Basin Drainage Commission. We oppose any additional funding for either of these projects.
- (f) We urge the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps of Engineers) to dredge all flood control-drainage canals associated with the Corps of Engineers' levee system in Louisiana when such work is supported by the parish Farm Bureau in the affected area.
- (g) We recommend that guidelines be established regarding pumping water and building levees in one parish that might affect bordering parishes.
- (h) We request that Farm Bureau urge the Governor, the legislature, the Louisiana Congressional Delegation, and state and federal natural resource management agencies to take the necessary steps to enhance and maintain freshwater and sediment flows in Louisiana's coastal wetlands. This is an attempt to sustain a healthy marsh system and sustain the availability of freshwater resources vital to the economic viability of agriculture in our coastal parishes. Any projects undertaken in a particular parish should have the consideration of the impact the project would have on adjoining parishes. Drainage improvements within a parish to address local flooding problems can proceed at any time after downstream improvements have been made.
- (i) We request that the Corps of Engineers continue to maintain Locks 1, 2, and 3, as well as the Pearl River Navigation Canal and Levee System.
- (j) We request that the Corps of Engineers allow recreational users of the Pearl River Navigation Canal System and that the users of Locks 1, 2, and 3 be allowed access to the docks at these locations.
- (k) We recommend that the Federal Government and Corps of Engineers have financial responsibility for upgrading the levees in the Tensas Basin Levee District in Northeast Louisiana. The levees should be stabilized in place and not by levee setbacks that take private property and prime farmland. In the event that this is not possible, we recommend that the landowner be compensated for the fair market value of land taken to maintain or improve levees or to build setback levees.
- (l) We urge the Army Corps of Engineers to use the value of a crop grown in an area as part of the cost benefit ratio for storm surge protection plans.

2. Irrigation and Drainage

- (a) We endorse a coordinated program of the Department of Public Works (DPW) and the Corps of Engineers in developing a plan to control salt water intrusion from the Gulf of Mexico into streams used for irrigation in Louisiana. In implementing a program to supply fresh water for irrigation purposes, we urge that these agencies coordinate efforts to assure that drainage networks be maintained during heavy overflow from reservoirs to provide an adequate supply of fresh water.
- (b) Because of the importance of a permanent, adequate supply of fresh water to the economy of Louisiana and the necessity of assuring an even larger supply to take care of future growth, we urge work with other organizations in the development of all feasible water resource development projects and encourage funding of the chloride research program for the Red River for use in municipal water systems and irrigation.
- (c) We offer encouragement and assistance to LSU in the expansion of research on the problem of irrigation, including the Red River.
- (d) We oppose the effort by local governing bodies in parishes adjacent to the Red River to remove funds from the Red River Waterway Commission.
- (e) We encourage the Red River Valley Association to develop programs for reducing or eliminating the salt content from the River.
- (f) We urge the engineers of the DPW, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and all commissions, committees, and boards to make public as soon as practical, the results of their studies and research and provide background information on which their decisions are based.
- (g) We urge that Farm Bureau resist the efforts of various organized groups to stop needed watershed and drainage projects in Louisiana.
- (h) We support capital outlay funds for replacement of the existing pumps in the Bayou Rapides Red River control structure.
- (i) We urge the DPW, the Corps of Engineers, and the appropriate levee districts to work toward improving the overall drainage in all parishes that are drained by the Atchafalaya Floodway. We also request better protection by federal and state agencies of land from backwater flooding, especially if this backwater flooding is caused and can be stopped by drainage systems and structures in place, by modifying or changing current rules and regulations, or by scheduled maintenance of these systems. We request that work in this area be expedited because of flooding problems in most parishes that are drained by the Atchafalaya Floodway.
- (j) We recommend that the Corps of Engineers conduct an updated study on the problem of draining water from behind all levee systems, as well as levee districts, in Louisiana.
- (k) We oppose the inclusion of streams in the scenic rivers system which are important for drainage of agricultural land areas.
- (l) We support the continuation of the Aquatic Plant Research and Control Program.

- (m) In principle, we support the clearing and dredging of the Tensas River when funds become available since the Corps of Engineers and the Madison Soil Conservation District both have endorsed this action to improve drainage. We support the efforts of the Tensas River Basin Technical Steering Committee in developing a plan of work for addressing ecological and socio-economic issues in the Tensas River Basin of Northeast Louisiana.
- (n) We feel that landowners should be compensated at fair market value for erosion on their property caused by government actions.
- (o) We recommend that the Bayou Lafourche Siphon Freshwater Diversion Restoration Project in Louisiana conduct extensive research on the impact this project would have on the agricultural industry along Bayou Lafourche before its approval and commencement. We request that the proper governmental agencies keep the citizens of all affected parishes informed of all proposals concerning the Bayou Lafourche Siphon Project.
- (p) We urge LFBF to pursue the feasibility of continuing the dredging of Bayou Lafourche from its origin in Donaldsonville to the Assumption Parish Water Facility.
- (q) We request a study of the ways to enhance the surface water supplies in Louisiana.
- (r) We request that consideration be given to high water during times of excessive rains in the Mermentau Basin. We support maintaining the fresh water integrity of the Mermentau Basin. We also request that Farm Bureau work with our congressional delegation to secure the necessary authority for the Corps to repair breaches in levee systems and structures and to maintain these systems and structures to prevent saltwater intrusion into our freshwater basins.
- (s) We request that Farm Bureau assist in getting Cancienne Canal dredged.
- (t) We request that Farm Bureau facilitate a meeting between Pointe Coupee, West Baton Rouge, Iberville, Assumption, and other affected parishes to the south to discuss a solution to the drainage problems faced by Pointe Coupee Parish and others.
- (u) We request that Farm Bureau seek modifications in parish water treatment systems' use of salt for water softening due to salt contamination of streams and designate every stream used by agriculture as a designated agricultural-use stream.

3. Water Diversion

- (a) We oppose any action to divert water from the Mississippi River, Sabine River, Toledo Bend Reservoir, and all aquifers within the state to other states for any reason until all present and future needs for water in Louisiana have been studied and ample safeguards made to assure Louisiana first priority to water from these sources.
- (b) We are opposed to any national or regional plan, except fresh water diversion projects, to divert water from the Mississippi River if such changes affect the natural flow of the river and its tributaries or result in salinity, pollution, navigation hazards, or damage to wildlife, fishing, industry, and agriculture in Louisiana.
- (c) We request that the appropriate state or federal agency initiate a comprehensive study to evaluate the viability of moving water from the Red River through existing natural and man-made channels into the Mermentau Basin for agricultural use and wetland benefits.
- (d) We urge LFBF to support the fortification of the southern spoil bank on the Intercoastal Canal.
- (e) We recommend that the Mermentau Basin in South Louisiana be declared a freshwater reservoir to be used for agriculture.
- (f) We support freshwater diversion for irrigation purposes, such as the Boeuf River/Tensas Project and Red River and we support the Red River Compact.
- (g) We request LFBF petition the proper state and federal agencies to allow flexibility in an upward deviation of 3%-4% from the normal water flow from the Mississippi River to the Atchafalaya Basin to benefit the maintenance of this system by scouring the silt from the rivers and their tributaries.

4. Coastal Wetlands

- (a) The Corps of Engineers should establish as a primary mission the enhancement, restoration, and maintenance of viable coastal wetlands. The relationship between the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and farmers in providing technical assistance in joint soil and water conservation projects should serve as a successful model. Assistance to private wetlands landowners through incentives such as cost-share and technical assistance programs should replace the often adversarial role of federal agencies that frequently discourage positive wetlands enhancement projects.
- (b) Coastal wetlands deterioration in Louisiana has been caused primarily by the secondary effects of various channelization projects. Federal wetlands policy must address this issue and provide an adequate long-term remedy to this major cause of wetlands loss. The permit process must direct and allow for corrective measures to be taken in areas which have been detrimentally affected by the aforementioned channelization projects.
- (c) Coastal wetlands policy should clearly establish that major losses of wetlands in coastal Louisiana are attributable to human activity benefiting national interests.
- (d) Environmentally sound exploration and development of oil and natural gas reserves in coastal Louisiana should be encouraged. Current federal permitting policies and regulations have greatly hindered the oil and gas industry and have significantly reduced the economic return from private wetlands in South Louisiana.
- (e) Currently both the Fish & Wildlife Services (FWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS) evaluate the impact of proposed coastal projects on fisheries resources. We recommend

that the FWS should be the federal agency that evaluates the impact of proposed coastal projects on fisheries and wildlife resources.

- (f) The concept of mitigation banking should be established in coastal wetlands permitting; however, where mitigation projects are available on permit applicant's land, such sites/projects should be given first consideration.
 - (g) Mitigation should only be required where convincing, adverse environmental damage can be documented. Wetlands protection, enhancement, restoration, and maintenance projects should never require mitigation. Such projects should be encouraged through cost-share/incentive programs sponsored through USDA or the Corps of Engineers. We request that LFBF work with the Corps of Engineers to reduce or eliminate the mitigation requirements for maintenance of existing drainage canals and bayous.
 - (h) We support the full funding and implementation of coastal restoration and coastal protection measures.
 - (i) We oppose any single agency having final authority in matters of wetlands determinations. We strongly recommend the LFBF Board of Directors request the Commissioner of Agriculture and Forestry to appoint a task force including-but not limited to-farmers, landowners, and appropriate representatives from our institutions of higher education that would review and make recommendations regarding water issues on agricultural lands. We further recommend that LFBF support legislation during the 2010 legislative session that would request the Corps of Engineers to work with this commission on all wetland issues impacting agriculture. We oppose the inclusion of the term wetlands in the definition of navigable waters of the U.S.
5. Coastal Zone Management
- (a) We recommend that Farm Bureau represent the interests of agriculture in matters relating to coastal zone management. We support the efforts of Vermilion, Cameron, and Calcasieu parishes and their efforts to form and fund a tri-parish coastal protection authority with the possibility of eventually including eastern and western components
 - (b) We support:
 - (1) The present boundaries of the current coastal zone be retained.
 - (2) Implementation of the Coastal Zone Management Plan by agricultural producers should be voluntary. Emphasis should be placed on education, technical assistance, and BMPs.
 - (c) We support a well-funded program to control erosion of our coastal marshes and wetlands. We support the continuation of the Farm Bureau Coastal Activities and Wetlands Advisory Committee. We oppose any and all shell dredging near Vermilion Bay or any barrier island that exists off Louisiana waters. The barrier islands and shell reefs are critical to the protection and restoration of the Louisiana Gulf Coast and the maintenance of productive estuaries for our fisheries resources.
 - (d) We urge that the Farm Bureau Coastal Activities and Wetlands Advisory Committee study the impact of land lost from flooding, erosion, and pollution to all coastal parishes from the Mississippi border to the Texas border on a continuing basis.
6. Salt Water Intrusion
- Since Section 8(g) of the O.C.S. Lands Act, as amended in 1978, makes funds available to states impacted by offshore oil and gas operators, we recommend that 50 percent of all future Section 8(g) funds be used in parishes and counties of impacted areas to protect against further erosion and land loss. Because the loss of our marshes and wetlands by erosion is having an adverse impact on national economic development, we support an effort to have the Secretary of Agriculture include private landowners in soil conservation practices under existing USDA programs.
7. Soil Typing Survey
- We recommend that the NRCS and the Corps of Engineers continually reclassify land with respect to overall improvements in order for landowners to be eligible for all benefits realized from improved farmland.
8. Air and Water Pollution
- We generally support clean air and water and urge Farm Bureau to work with state and federal pollution control agencies in the interest of agriculture in Louisiana. We are opposed, however, to the proposed modifications to the Clean Air Act as being too stringent to be workable.
9. Hazardous Waste Disposal
- We support the proper storage and disposal of hazardous waste. We also recommend that Farm Bureau continue to assist parish Farm Bureaus in averting any development of improper hazardous waste disposal sites which would adversely affect its future.
10. Sanitary Landfills
- We support sound, environmentally safe methods of recycling waste in lieu of landfill disposal facilities. However, we recommend that sanitary landfills be kept open and maintained until acceptable alternative methods are available.
11. Land Use
- (a) We oppose any federal land use planning. We believe that land use planning can best be accomplished at the parish or comparable level of government and by private landowners. We are also opposed to government agencies restricting the use of prime agricultural land.
 - (b) We urge that agricultural interests be alert to parish and community land use planning activities and seek to have input with regard to the importance of agriculture and any proposed restrictions

on the use of agriculturally oriented property. We strongly recommend that a farmer or rural landowner whose land is used for farming purposes be added to all land use planning committees or boards.

- (c) We support the study of laws and regulations governing wind energy windmills and aerial right of ways to develop strategies and possible legislation to prevent windmills from causing interference with agricultural operations.
12. Land Ownership
- (a) We support the maintenance of the private property rights of U.S. citizens to make whatever use of their property they want as long as it does not adversely affect the property rights of others.
 - (b) We recommend that individuals or groups filing suits or securing injunctions which adversely affect the landowner's use of his property, whether by depreciation or otherwise, be required to post a bond sufficient to cover any income, attorney fees, or use lost as a result of the suit or injunction if the court decides in favor of the landowner.
 - (c) We support those provisions of the mineral code, particularly the Louisiana Abandoned Oilfield Waste Site Law that requires the cleanup of drilling sites and waste pits in an attempt to restore the surface to its original condition.
 - (d) We recommend that Farm Bureau study the quick-taking provisions in the expropriation statutes and offer possible solutions to landowners.
13. Wildlife and Fisheries
- (a) We recommend that the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) work closely with farmers to control damage from wildlife to crops and livestock.
 - (b) We support state funding for a predator control program in Louisiana.
Because of the overpopulation of alligators in certain areas of the state, we request that the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries increase the number of tags per acre and decrease the number of live releases that offset egg removal in order to help control the population. We further request that additional personnel be assigned to speed up the process of determining the overpopulation.
 - (c) We support the LDWF "Operation Game Thief."
 - (d) Catfish and crawfish farmers suffer severe losses because of the double-crested cormorant and ibis; therefore, we request the LDWF to seek an exception to protective regulations in order for damaged producers to protect their fish.
 - (e) We oppose the taking of any agricultural land, including forestland in production or out of production, for the black bear or any other endangered or threatened species as designated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We urge that the black bear habitat not be expanded any further at all.
 - (f) We recommend that Farm Bureau renew efforts to request LDAF to provide additional qualified trappers to assist landowners on a statewide basis and in a timely manner with the control and elimination of nuisance animals, and in particular beaver, nutria, coyotes, feral hogs and domestic hogs not in captivity.
 - (g) We oppose the use of gill nets but oppose state legislation which bans the use of other types of nets for commercial fishermen. We support a limited-entry program for out-of-state fishermen in order to preserve Louisiana water for Louisiana fishermen.
14. Property Rights
- (a) We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to monitor and protect the property rights of landowners and farmers.
 - (b) We support the landowner notifying the tenant farmer in a timely manner of his intentions to sell the land well in advance of the proposed sale which would take the land out of cultivation. Before the land is developed the landowner must financially compensate the tenant farmer for his crop and investments or reach a mutual agreement for financial compensation with the tenant farmer for his crop and investment where a written lease is not present.
We recommend that meetings be held with other interested groups prior to the next legislative session to obtain agreement on a notice of oral lease to be filed in the Clerk of Court's office so that enabling legislation can be introduced to give some measure of relief to tenants filing such notices.
 - (c) We request that LFBF work to increase the communication between landlords, tenant farmers, and land surveyors, and others having legitimate business on the leased premises and seek ways to help limit tenant farmers' liability when these groups enter their rented land. We also request that efforts be made to allow tenant farmers to collect for damages to crops and equipment that result from such activity.
 - (d) We recommend that seismic and/or exploration companies boring, breaking, or puncturing the soil to a depth greater than 25 feet be required to obtain a \$25,000 surety bond. Upon depositing the bond with the parish council, the company may be granted a rights-of-way permit contingent upon an approved plan by the company to backfill all drilled or excavated holes with the original soil or some approved substitute from the base of the hole to the original surface level.
 - (e) We oppose the expansion of the right of expropriation to any entity, agency, or person not already having such rights under state law.

- (f) We recommend legislation that under certain circumstances will give private individuals the ability to separate mineral interests from land in perpetuity in order to compete with federal and state agencies and departments having this authority in selling or transferring tracts of real estate.
 - (g) We recommend that entities having the right of expropriation be prohibited from taking privately owned land to be given or sold to another private entity.
 - (h) We request changes to make private companies liable for legal expenses in expropriation of land by private entities if they lose their case.
15. Environmental Issues
- (a) We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to make available to farm operators information concerning the disposal, recycling, and reuse of used farm supplies such as empty containers, oils, etc.
 - (b) Prior to closure, we recommend that it be mandatory for a property seller to disclose any prior use of the property, such as a landfill or hazardous waste dump, which may affect its future use.
 - (c) We support voluntary, incentive-based programs for the agricultural industry in addressing environmental issues.
 - (d) We support legislation to allow the burning of one day's use of properly rinsed and cleaned farm use containers and seed bags.
 - (e) We oppose any legislation that would restrict a farmer's right to agricultural burning.
 - (f) We urge that timber dealers be legally responsible for cleanup of tree tops and debris that interfere with drainage of creeks, streams, and ditches.
 - (g) We urge farmers to refrain from burning and spraying lands in close proximity to schools which may be disruptive to school children during school hours from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
 - (h) We recommend continued support of voluntary participation in Operation Quackback in conjunction with the Louisiana Rice Growers and Extension Service.
 - (i) We request Farm Bureau to pursue state and national legislation that would require retail outlets to use biodegradable bags at the point of purchase in an effort to reduce the pollution problem plaguing our state as a result of the use of plastic bags.
 - (j) We request Farm Bureau to encourage sugarcane growers to have at least one certified burn manager on each sugarcane farming operation.
 - (k) We request Farm Bureau to support legislation to continue landowners' legal rights to sue parties to recover damages for pollution to surface and ground water with the following provisions:
 - (1) Notification to DEQ and DNR of lawsuits filed to recover damages to groundwater.
 - (2) Mandate that court-awarded damages for groundwater contamination be completed by landowners as rendered by the court and under the supervision of DEQ and the court.
 - (3) Cleanup plan developed by landowner and DEQ be implemented timely within six months of court decree.
 - (4) Court-awarded damages be deposited with the landowners, subject to oversight by the Court.
 - (l) We urge and support efforts by the Louisiana State Legislature and the U.S. Congress to force petroleum companies to clean up the leaking oil which is damaging Louisiana and its citizens and to restore our marshes, beaches, farmland, and seafood and fishing industry to the conditions existing before the oil leakage, which is the direct cause of this damage.
16. Hydrokinetics
- We urge that the state, through the Department of Natural Resources, promote the generation and use of renewable energy derived from hydrokinetics in waterways throughout the state to ensure the viability of the state's natural resources, to provide a continuing, utility scale, clean energy source for the citizens and agricultural businesses of Louisiana to support economic development through job retention and creation in Louisiana, and to promote a clean and lasting environment for the citizens of the state.

Education and Youth

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1. Education
- (a) We support adequate teacher salaries from permanent, dedicated funds to maintain and improve our Louisiana educational system.
 - (b) We recommend that a percentage of lottery revenues be devoted strictly to classroom instruction.
 - (c) We support recertification of teachers on a recurring basis by rewarding those teachers who submit to such a program with substantial increases in their present salary structure. We also support efforts to index salaries so that teachers who teach beyond 12 years would continue to receive adjustments to their salary up to 30 years.
 - (d) We support efforts to strengthen student testing programs and recommend that this apply to all graduating students.
 - (e) While we support standardized tests for students, we oppose the disproportionate emphasis placed on the results of these so-called "high-stakes" tests that puts undue pressure on administrators, teachers, and students. This results in students being taught primarily to prepare for the tests rather than basic skills.
 - (f) We oppose any effort to tie education reform to a comprehensive tax increase.
 - (g) We support the teaching of respect and patriotism in all schools.
 - (h) We support "Agriculture in the Classroom" (AIRC) and other educational programs which can develop an understanding of economics, supply and demand, and the sources of food, fiber,

pharmaceuticals, and other life-sustaining items and recommend that these programs be made available to all students. We also recommend that teachers receive training to make them agriculturally literate. We recommend that Agriscience 1 be required for high school graduation.

- (i) We encourage all agricultural organizations and businesses to provide financial support to the Louisiana Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom in order to further the education of the youth and teachers of Louisiana about the agricultural industry.
- (j) We recommend that our Congressional delegation be contacted to encourage the continued funding of the USDA AITC program under the new administration.
- (k) We support free textbooks and transportation for all children in accredited state public or private schools regardless of when the school was organized.
- (l) We support tax-deductible status for private school tuition and educational school vouchers.
- (m) We encourage all levels of government to recognize the right of private groups to organize and operate educational institutions and the importance of maintaining conditions which permit such institutions to operate.

2. Higher Education

- (a) We request that Louisiana residents be given first consideration over out-of-state students for admission to state medical schools, vet schools, student aid, and on-campus jobs. Students majoring in agriculture should be given first consideration for jobs in university ag departments.
- (b) In an effort to offset budget cuts, we recommend that the boards of supervisors for the state universities exercise their authority to raise the tuition fees for foreign college students to the extent that reflects the total actual cost of the education.
- (c) We support a continuing agricultural program at state-run universities outside the land-grant universities.
- (d) We oppose the current state legislative policy of using higher education funding for political leverage and support funding higher education at the highest level possible.
- (e) We recommend that a committee of two or three people be appointed to work with the appropriate people from the Board of Regents, the BESE Board, and others involved to further reform the way college credits are transferred from university to university (and from two-year colleges) so that accredited courses will be accepted from one university to another within the state.
- (f) We recommend that Farm Bureau urge the legislature to support land-grant universities and provide more funds to help farmers and ranchers receive the services they need.

3. Vocational Education

- (a) We support the inclusion of FFA/vocational agricultural programs in our public school systems. We recommend that FFA/vocational agricultural education be fully funded on a 12-month basis. We urge that Farm Bureau work with the Louisiana Agriculture Teachers' Association to solve the problem of providing leadership for the Agricultural Education/FFA Program in Louisiana.
- (b) We recommend that all 4-H activities conducted with the local school system continue to be classified co-curriculum under BESE regulations and that agriscience programs be classified as intra-curriculum. We recommend that all parish school boards be encouraged to adjust student schedules to allow them the opportunity to participate in these activities.
- (c) We support training courses in agricultural equipment operation and repair in technical colleges. These classes would also include instructional information on safety standards which should be followed on farming operations.
- (d) We support a two-track educational curriculum in the high-school system that includes both a college preparatory and a vocational preparatory alternative.
- (e) We support the Louisiana School for the AgriSciences (LaSAS) and the establishment of similar agriscience-focused schools in the state.
- (f) We urge continued funding for 4-H county agents and other personnel involved in programs for our youth as we regard these activities as being among the most beneficial to students in both grammar and high school.
- (g) We support the continuance of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Act and the funding thereof to secure programs of agricultural education in our state.

4. Food Animal Veterinarians

- (a) We request that the state fund Act No. 809, which was previously passed by the state legislature, and which provides for loans to eligible applicants who are Louisiana residents and will obtain doctor of veterinary degrees which will qualify them to be food animal veterinarians.
- (b) We urge an increase in LSU Veterinary School class size with more emphasis to be placed on food animal practice.
- (c) We urge the restructuring of entrance criteria to place more weight on actual prior clinical experience.
- (d) We urge that the Louisiana Veterinary Medical Association be allowed to nominate one applicant from each of their nine districts and that this nomination be used to enhance their chances for admission to the LSU Veterinary School.

Safety

- 1. In view of the excellent safety record in those states which place a major emphasis on driver education in the schools, we recommend that driver's training be established and funded by the state in all public junior high and senior high schools.

2. We recommend that rural citizens be given good road conditions equal to others around the state through the use of painted white lines, speed limit signs, caution lights when necessary, and stop signs at intersections on farm-to-market roads. Further, guardrails on new bridges should be a minimum of 30 feet apart.
3. We urge all railroads to keep weeds mowed at all crossings and maintain weed control of rights-of-way. Crossings should be adequately maintained. We urge state and local governing bodies to enforce these rules in the interest of safety. We urge that arms, bells, and lights at all railroad crossings on state and parish highways be installed and maintained and urge legislation to assure that this is accomplished.
4. We request Farm Bureau to research the possibility of having laws that regulate railroads from blocking public roads to apply to private roads as well.
5. Violations of OSHA can be costly to farmers. We urge that information continue to be provided to farmers regarding their obligations and responsibilities.
6. We recommend that the LSU Firemen Training Program continue to offer educational programs between local fire departments and/or districts and local water districts on the proper utilization of firefighting equipment, especially fire hydrants of different size standards.
7. We encourage and support the use of slow-moving vehicle emblems and favor ongoing programs to inform the motoring public of their responsibility to reduce speed and be cautious when approaching and overtaking vehicles displaying this emblem. Farm Bureau members should be encouraged to use SMV signs only on slow-moving vehicles as specified in the present state law.
8. We support the strict enforcement of the law requiring pulpwood haulers to secure their loads to prevent logs from falling on the roadways.
9. We request that Farm Bureau make specialized harvest safety signs available to all farmers. We also request that they work with DOTD to make these signs available statewide and easily recognizable by all drivers.
10. Towers, of any description, are posing a greater and greater threat to agricultural operations, and in particular, aerial operations. We urge LFBF to work with whoever is responsible for legislation, rules, and regulations regarding the placement, construction, and maintenance of all towers in agricultural operations areas in an effort to reduce loss of life from accidents involving any agricultural equipment.

State Government

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1. Labor-Management Relations
 - (a) We oppose unionization of farm labor.
 - (b) We oppose agricultural labor relations legislation.
 - (c) We oppose the repeal of the Louisiana Right-to-Work Law. We also oppose any attempt to weaken the Right-to-Work Law by passage of the agency shop concept.
2. Louisiana Welfare Program

We urge the Welfare Department to insist that employable persons return to the labor force instead of remaining on welfare rolls.
3. Public Institutions in Agriculture

We oppose public institutions going into commercial agriculture as unfair competition to local producers.
4. Worker's Compensation
 - (a) We support the Louisiana Worker's Compensation Corporation but urge that Farm Bureau continue to work for equitable worker's compensation laws.
 - (b) We oppose the increase of worker's compensation payment benefits until such time as adequate safeguards are incorporated to prevent abuse of the law.
 - (c) We support an exemption in state law that would allow employees to sign a waiver to opt out of worker's compensation coverage that is otherwise required.
5. Unemployment Compensation
 - (a) We strongly support the current exemptions provided for agricultural employers with regard to having to pay unemployment taxes and request Farm Bureau to work toward increasing these exemptions. We also support putting a ceiling on unemployment compensation for part-time or temporary workers.
 - (b) We support allowing farm operators and corporation stockholders to have the option of whether to pay unemployment insurance premiums on themselves even though they pay the premium on their employees. If such persons are required to pay premiums, they should be eligible to receive payments under certain circumstances other than dissolving the corporation.
 - (c) We support the exemption for farmers from paying unemployment insurance on full-time college students.
6. Insurance Laws
 - (a) We oppose Louisiana statutes which allow intra-family lawsuits.
 - (b) We support the continued efforts of the state legislature and/or local police juries to expand local fire stations in each parish. This gives more fire protection to the rural community and helps to lower fire insurance for individuals living outside fire districts.
 - (c) We recommend that borrowers not be required to purchase insurance from the institution which issued the loan. Instead, we recommend that borrowers have the option to purchase required insurance from the company of their preference.
 - (d) We support the repeal of the direct-action statute against insurance companies.

- (e) We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to support tort reform legislation to return to a fairer judicial system for all landowners and citizens of the state.
 - (f) We urge the strict enforcement of the law requiring the revocation of the license plate, as well as the driver's license, of any individual driving without liability insurance.
 - (g) We request continued support for the state police and local law enforcement agencies' efforts in checking motorists for liability insurance coverage.
 - (h) We support the reduction of the underlying costs of automobile insurance for individuals complying with the laws of the state of Louisiana. In order to accomplish this, we recommend the examination of proposals – such as limiting the rights of individuals to recover damages if they have not complied with the financial responsibility law, tort reform, enhanced enforcement of the financial responsibility, pure no-fault insurance, and any other relevant proposals – to determine the most effective methods to reduce the underlying costs of automobile insurance coverage.
 - (i) We oppose class-action suits.
 - (j) We request that LFBF address the serious liability problems regarding farm equipment and implements on public highways. LFBF and its insurance companies should explore all laws regarding this issue and work with the legislature to improve protection to our farmers.
 - (k) We request that LFBF remain vigilant and influential in the process of stabilizing property insurance availability and affordability for Farm Bureau members throughout Louisiana, paying specific attention to wind and hail insurers and public policy makers to assure that the resources available to members are leveraged to maximize choice and minimize volatility.
7. State Game Laws
- (a) We urge that all efforts of any group to add any species of egrets to the list of legal game birds in Louisiana be actively resisted because they are essential in the control of flies and other pests among cattle.
 - (b) We recommend that state wildlife enforcement agents be required to respect the personal and private rights of landowners as stated in the Constitution. We also recommend that state wildlife enforcement agents be required to use headlights when driving on public roads after dark.
 - (c) We oppose the infusion and/or relocation into the state of any wild animals not native to Louisiana.
8. Weights and Measures
- (a) We urge the Department of Weights and Measures of the LDAF to continue to make preseason checks and seasonal checks for accuracy of scales and weighing procedures at all major points of sale and weight stations throughout the state.
 - (b) We support additional funds if necessary for increased inspection to provide more frequent and accurate testing for agricultural commodity scales.
 - (c) We recommend that DOTD upgrade bridges on all roads to comply with allowable load limits.
9. Litter Laws
- (a) We urge stronger and more aggressive enforcement of existing litter laws, particularly on parish roads and rights-of-way where litter causes drainage problems. We recommend the fine for littering be a minimum of \$100 and a maximum of \$500 on highways and parish roads. The fine for littering and/or dumping on private property should be no less than \$1,000 per violation. A penalty should be levied against the driver of the vehicle from which litter was dumped or thrown. We recommend that parish Farm Bureaus urge state and local agencies to aggressively enforce litter laws along public rights-of-way.
 - (b) We support a program using state and local prisoners to pick up litter on all highway rights-of-way. Salvageable items should be recycled to help defer the costs.
10. Recycling
- (a) We support a statewide recycling program.
 - (b) We recommend that use of nonreturnable glass bottles be prohibited.
 - (c) We request that farmers and ranchers be relieved from liability from the pickup of waste oil by recyclers.
 - (d) We support legislation that strengthens laws and penalties that pertain to the selling of materials to scrap dealers, specifically wire and other copper/aluminum items.
11. Agricultural Law Enforcement
- (a) We recommend continuing steps to see that all laws presently under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner of the LDAF be enforced as intended; and, in particular, we demand continuing action to force all feed and fertilizer companies to comply with laws regulating the sale of feed and fertilizer and to assess penalties for all ingredients found to be deficient. We also oppose any efforts to weaken the penalties and standards of the present Louisiana fertilizer law.
 - (b) We recommend no clemency to elevator operators convicted of fraud.
 - (c) We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to support the "Crime Stoppers" program for farm theft. This program should represent a coalition of agriculturally related interests and businesses and should be coordinated with the LDAF Enforcement Division.
 - (d) We recommend that the bond requirement for grain dealers and rice mills be increased from the current \$50,000 to a larger amount based on the volume of grain handled.
 - (e) We request that Farm Bureau work with parish governing authorities on problems landowners experience with the placement of unauthorized advertisements and political campaign signs on their property.
 - (f) We recommend that the LDAF continue to investigate the proper labeling of BASA fish.

- (g) We request that Farm Bureau seek legislation, if necessary, to exempt poultry growers from any fee associated with the general CAFO permit developed and implemented by DEQ.
12. Trespass Laws
We continue to support trespass laws which benefit Louisiana farmers.
We support vigorous prosecution of off-road vehicles trespassing on private land and the selling of those vehicles at public auction with proceeds going to local law enforcement agencies.
13. Louisiana Preference Act
We recommend continued support for the LDAF seven-percent preference for Louisiana-produced commodities to state institutions.
14. Tax-Exempt Bonds
We support the concept of selling tax-free bonds for the benefit of the agricultural industry. We support having a portion of the money generated from these sales made available for production loans.
15. State Election Laws
(a) We oppose any change in state or local election laws which would allow a candidate to be elected to office without receiving a majority of the votes cast in the election.
(b) We recommend working with the Secretary of State to revise the voting dates in Louisiana. Due to the high cost of holding elections, we strongly recommend a reduction in the number of elections and also recommend that local and state elections be coordinated with national elections.
(c) We recommend that Farm Bureau give priority to seeking the establishment of two voting dates: one in November and the other in April. All state, parish, and local tax, millage, and bond issue elections should be held only on these dates to reduce costs and increase voter turnout.
16. Occupational License Taxes
We oppose the licensing or taxing of farmers and others in the agricultural community.
17. Agricultural Vandalism
We support prosecution to the fullest extent of the law of anyone, particularly animal rights activists and environmental activists, who is involved in sabotage and vandalism of farms and ranches and research facilities.
We recommend that LFBF pursue legislation to ban entry onto a livestock operation for the purpose of recording undercover video of staged incidents of abuse. We further recommend that lying on a job application for this purpose be punishable with a fine up to \$5000 and a year in prison.
18. Unfunded Mandates
We request Farm Bureau to take appropriate action to prevent both state and federal governments from mandating programs and regulations to parishes and municipalities and not providing the necessary funds to carry out their mandates. We further recommend that this request be given high priority.
19. Initiative and Referendum
We oppose any legislation that would establish initiatives or referendum in the laws of the State of Louisiana.
20. Expropriation Proceedings
(a) Because a new concept in the expropriation process called "Quick Take" is being proposed by some parish governing bodies, we urge Farm Bureau to keep all parish Farm Bureau organizations informed on this issue and work to get this provision defeated.
(b) We request that Farm Bureau support any and all bills introduced in the Louisiana Legislature that remove the rights of expropriation or condemnation from the Louisiana Airport Authority.
21. LDAF Budget
We request that Farm Bureau help to restore funding that was cut from the LDAF budget.
We request that LFBF propose legislation which would prohibit the legislature from taking self imposed funds (either fees or check-off funds) intended for specific purposes and allocating those funds for other purposes.
22. State Projects
We urge the Governor to support a comprehensive hurricane protection and restoration plan.
We request that Farm Bureau support a soybean processing industry.
23. Immigration
We recommend that LFBF be involved if state legislation is pursued to permit greater enforcement by state and local agencies of individuals' immigration and residency status in Louisiana.
24. Ag Value
We support education of our state legislators on the importance of the economic value of agriculture in our state. We also support encouraging them to join their local parish Farm Bureau and attend at least one Board meeting per year.

Fuel Supplies

211

1. We recommend that agriculture be given high priority for energy needs in the event of shortages and rationing.
2. We support a move to provide for conservation of gas and oil supplies to insure continued availability in the future and recommend that conservation and proper use of energy should be a high educational priority for federal, state, and local governments. We also recommend that Farm Bureau staff research possible closures of old fuel injection systems and make this information available to the Farm Bureau membership.
3. We encourage privately financed research on the use of agricultural and aquacultural commodities as sources of energy and as petroleum replacements.

4. We encourage an ethanol program, and we support a renewable fuels program with emphasis on a federal renewable fuels standard. We also support and encourage the use of biodiesel and support exploring efforts to make renewable fuels available to Louisiana farmers.
5. We support the use of ethanol-enriched fuels in all vehicles.
6. We support the labeling of all retail pumps showing additives added by all manufacturers, distributors, or dealers.
7. We request that Farm Bureau support through the legislative process a program by utility companies to purchase electricity from renewable sources at an equitable rate and that there be mandatory legislation that utility companies purchase a percentage of their usage from renewable resources.
8. We urge the creation of a Louisiana Renewable Energy Commission.

Law and Order

212

We support efforts that would make restitution of damages to a landowner possible under both a criminal or civil proceeding.

Promotion and Research Checkoffs

213

1. We recognize the right of producers to promote increased research, sale, and consumption of products they produce. Such programs must be initiated and controlled by producers of the commodity involved. We are opposed to any checkoff proposed when the federal or state government has administrative or veto power over the program. Checkoff programs must meet the following requirements:
 - (a) Funds collected must be used for research, education, market development, and promotion. No funds should be used for legislative or political purposes. However, we recommend special consideration for the rice industry to allow the Louisiana Rice Research Board and the Louisiana Rice Promotion Board to support a national legislative producer organization. We further recommend that no more than five percent of the total rice checkoff funds be used for legislative purposes on a national basis only.
 - (b) Referendum
The program must be approved by a majority of producers voting in a well-publicized referendum.
 - (c) Time Limit
Programs should have a time limit not to exceed five years in length with continuation of programs after that time requiring a majority of producers voting in a well-publicized referendum.
 - (d) Collection
The assessment will be made on all producers at the first point of sale.
 - (e) Refund
Any producer must have the right to a refund upon request with the exception of the dairy, cotton, and rice industries because of their unique situations.
 - (f) Administration
A producer board should have 100-percent control of administering the program. Farm Bureau should participate in naming the board to the extent that Farm Bureau has commodity interests in terms of membership of that particular commodity.
 - (g) Audit
An annual certified audit must be made and published.
 - (h) Annual Report
Administrators of the checkoff funds must be required to provide producers with a meaningful annual statement on income, expenses, funds, balance, and a progress report on achievement.
 - (i) We support agriculture on the highways which includes bumper stickers on farm vehicles to get our agricultural promotion message to the public.
 - (j) If ongoing court challenges to a state checkoff program prevail and current checkoff programs and/or provisions are found to be unconstitutional by the Louisiana Supreme Court, we will support efforts to restore these programs so that they can continue to effectively operate as current law provides.
2. Beef Promotion
 - (a) We support the 50-cent Louisiana beef checkoff. We urge that the other states also increase their checkoff for in-state promotion.
 - (b) We support the continued research and development of a "Certified Louisiana Calf" program.
3. Pecan Promotion
We request Farm Bureau to actively support passage of the Pecan Marketing Order.
4. Crawfish Promotion
 - (a) We support the tax on imported crawfish tail meat being raised from one cent to twenty-five cents per pound.
5. Commodity Promotion
 - (a) We request all state and federal agencies domiciled within the state to use domestic commodities in all food programs when available, and we request the Farm Bureau Women's Committee to continue their efforts to promote all commodities through a planned program.
 - (b) We urge the Farm Bureau Women's Committee to continue its promotion of Louisiana agricultural products.

Rural Development

214

1. Rural Development Commission
 - (a) We recommend that Farm Bureau work actively with Louisiana's Rural Development Commission to improve the infrastructure of rural areas to enhance living and working conditions in farming communities. We urge that emphasis be placed on attracting small industries to provide economic diversification; in particular, those industries that can further process agricultural products.
 - (b) We request that at least one seat on any parish planning commission be filled by a Farm Bureau parish board member or someone to represent the rural community.
2. Rural Health Services
 - (a) We support the Family Practice Division of the LSU School of Medicine so that additional doctors can be trained and placed in rural areas.
 - (b) We support the efforts of the Louisiana Rural Health Care Authorities to provide health care to under-served rural areas of Louisiana.
 - (c) We urge the state legislature to protect our rural health care providers during this challenging time of health care in Louisiana.
3. Rural Fire and Water Districts

We support the establishment of rural fire and water districts and recommend that each water district provide an adequate water supply for fire protection service.
4. Rural Drainage Systems

Because the Department of Health and Hospitals' current requirements seem burdensome concerning sewer treatment structures in rural residences, we request a reevaluation of standards concerning sewerage drainage.

Right-to-Farm Legislation

215

1. We support the concept of right-to-farm legislation.
2. We recommend that an exclusion from noise ordinances be given for all production and sustainable agricultural practices.

Pest Control and Eradication Programs

216

1. We urge the USDA and other appropriate federal agencies to support an effective fire ant program, including providing matching funds for state funds to be spent on such program, and we recommend that aerial spraying be used to help control fire ants whenever chemicals are approved by the EPA, except in sugar cane-producing areas.
2. We favor continued publicity regarding the danger of fire ants and support the efforts of the Commissioner of Agriculture to secure an effective pesticide for controlling fire ants. We also support research to discover new methods of controlling and eradicating fire ants and recommend that an integrated pest management program be studied and supported if it is found effective.
3. In light of the increasing population of Formosan termites and their potential to impose an economic impact on commercial sugar cane production, we request that Farm Bureau support funding of the Louisiana Formosan Termite Initiative and work with the AgCenter and the American Sugar Cane League in providing research on Formosan termite control.
4. We recommend that parish mosquito and rodent control services be extended to small businesses and farms.
5. We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to pursue securing funding for the tallow tree eradication program in Louisiana.
6. We recommend that Farm Bureau continue its strong support for the Boll Weevil Eradication Program.
7. We recommend continued research for the effective control of horse fly and horn fly infestation of cattle.
8. We recommend that the LDAF increase funding for the control of beavers in Louisiana.
9. We request LFBF work with Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries to develop a program to control the feral hog population.

Poultry Study Committee

217

We support the Louisiana Poultry Task Force established within the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry.

Homeland Security

218

We request that Farm Bureau inform its membership about the rules and regulations established by Homeland Security that need to be followed to comply with the law.

Policy Recommendations

219

Farm Program, National Affairs, and International Affairs shall be recommendations to the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF). Standard Operating Procedures for the Federation and Commodity Conference recommendations shall be recommendations to the Farm Bureau Board of Directors. Standard Operating Procedures for the Insurance Companies shall be recommendations to the appropriate Farm Bureau Insurance Companies Boards of Directors. Local, state, and federal agencies shall be apprised of Farm Bureau policy as the need arises.

Boards and Commissions**220**

We request that LFBF always submit full-time farmers for new appointments to sit as their representatives on the Baton Rouge Port Commission. Of the two positions, one should be primarily a grain farmer, and the other primarily a cane farmer.

We believe that only the Boards and Commissions that have direct authority to allocate or dispense funds be subject to financial disclosure of its members.

We recommend that, in regards to appointing commissioners that represent commodities they produce, the same ethics guidelines be used as those followed by the Port of New Orleans.

We support a change in the Greater Port of Baton Rouge security plan to allow non-TWIC card holders to use the grain facilities.

FARM PROGRAMS

FOLLOWING ARE LFBF'S POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO AFBF. THESE STATEMENTS, IN ADDITION TO THE REFERENCED AFBF POLICIES, CONSTITUTE OUR POLICIES AND POSITIONS ON ISSUES RELATIVE TO NATIONAL FARM PROGRAMS. SEE THE REFERENCED SECTIONS OF THE POLICIES FOR 2013 ADOPTED AT THE 94th ANNUAL MEETING OF AFBF IN JANUARY 2013.

National Farm Policy

301

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 239)

Improving net farm income is Farm Bureau's most important goal. We will support programs of an innovative nature that increase net farm income.

The Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA) continues to move the U.S. toward a market-based, export-competitive agriculture. We support maintaining commodity program support funding and oppose shifting funding into conservation or disaster programs.

We oppose all reductions in farm program spending to farmers until all other government programs have equaled the same percentage of cuts farmers have sustained. In developing the 2013 Farm Bill, we support maintaining the current level and delivery of direct payments and subsidies. In developing other programs that could replace direct payments, options should be included that adequately address the needs of different commodities. Producers of various commodities need to have programs to choose from that effectively address their unique perils. Each option, revenue-based or price-based, must provide effective protection in the event of price declines, particularly multi-year low-price events. Options must be relevant to today's and future costs and crop price environments, plain and bankable to lenders, and tailored to producers' risks. We support programs that offer opportunities to update yields and upgrade target prices. We oppose any changes to the current payment limitations and eligibility provisions. We support programs developed to meet specific WTO obligations such as the proposed cotton STAX. Any new government farm program must be accompanied by regulatory and tax relief for farmers. Producers should be compensated for added costs due to government regulations. We oppose payment limitations on crop insurance reimbursements. We oppose public disclosure of crop insurance payments.

We recommend that any future farm policy legislation should be linked to a reduction of global tariff rates before any reduction in domestic subsidies is enacted. Currently, access to world markets remains limited due to continued trade barriers and internal farm policies of foreign countries. Therefore, it is necessary for American farmers to receive program payments to offset these limitations.

We support the U.S. government developing a domestic food policy that provides a program for U.S. agriculture that maintains its competitive position in the global marketplace and preserves domestic markets and long-term profitability for U.S. producers.

We support increasing the loan rates within the marketing loan programs and non-marketing loan programs for the various commodities. We support a flexible loan rate for cotton. This should only be done in a manner that will allow commodities to be sold at competitive prices in the world market while at the same time maintaining adequate income support to producers.

We recommend that FSA allow farmers to apply for LDP payments but wait until after the grain has been shipped and accurate weights determined before collecting 100 percent of the payment. We also request that producers be able to apply for LDPs simultaneously when certifying acreage. If the producer provides no other notification, the LDP rate would be locked in at the date of sale; therefore, no producer's beneficial interest would be lost. We recommend that producers be allowed the option of an interest-free deferment on LDPs until the next calendar year, when selling multiple years' production in one year.

We oppose the use of loan origination fees for government nonrecourse loans. We oppose program service fees that are applied to deficit reduction. We are strongly opposed to any type of mandatory production, acreage control, or marketing quotas for crops that had production flexibility contracts and continue to receive direct payments.

We vigorously support a viable domestic sugar program with nonrecourse loan rates set at a level no lower than present values with no market price cap. We support maintaining the current sugar provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill. We support the addition of a Refined Cane Sugar Loan Rate. We support sugar marketing allocations being tied to the grower and landowner. When a farmer moves from one mill to another, we support maintaining a provision to permit the appropriate amount of mill marketing allocation for sugar cane base acres being processed by another sugar mill. We support maintaining Farm Bill provisions that permit sugarcane base acres that are permanently lost to non-agricultural use to be transferred to acreage in Louisiana capable of producing and delivering sugarcane to a processor in Louisiana. We support market balancing programs within the Farm Bill Sugar Title, such as the Feed Stock Flexibility Program and development of new programs, to offset surplus sugar in the U.S. market in order to keep domestic sugar production at adequate levels. We support maintaining the value of molasses in the Sugar Program Minimum Grower Payments.

We oppose singling out any program crop for more severe treatment in Farm Bill negotiations due to a WTO ruling.

We support the continuation of adequate government funding of the FSA. We oppose further budget cuts to FSA as delivery of farm programs will be jeopardized with additional budget cuts.

We recommend that when the opportunity presents itself, Farm Bureau should actively pursue an increase in the support levels for all commodities. We support maintaining the current fruit and vegetable planting prohibition in the next farm bill if possible.

We support the continued efforts of the Commissioner of the LDAF and the State Ratification Committee to establish a National Dairy Equity Act.

We support the strict enforcement by FSA county committees of the non-agriculture determination of land, and the conserving use provisions related to the control of noxious weeds and erosion on idled farm land.

Agricultural Exports

302

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 250 and 252)

We support a system that would provide compensation by increased loan rates or other means for agricultural export losses due to deliberate currency devaluation by competitive agricultural exporting countries in lieu of trade tariffs.

The trade embargo between Cuba and the United States should be lifted immediately for food; in particular, rice, along with medicine, only if the trade agreement specifies that U.S. sugar imports from Cuba are not allowed to increase above Cuba's current import levels. We strongly oppose any resumption of trade with Cuba unless these conditions are met.

We oppose farm commodities being made a part of trade sanctions with other nations. An embargo should not be declared without the consent of Congress unless the U.S. is in danger of armed conflict at home or abroad, and then the President should have the sole authority. We also oppose limitations on farm product purchases in connection with loans and credits to other nations.

We oppose provisions which allocate the financing of PL 480 sales on the basis of the per capita gross national incomes of the potential recipients. We urge that all PL 480 business be in actual grain from the United States and not in the form of cash to foreign countries. We support funding USDA's PL 480-Title I Program at levels no lower than the fiscal year 2006 level.

We urge the effective implementation of export promotion programs which use surplus U.S. commodities as incentives.

We recommend that certain specialty meat products for export have to meet only the inspection standards of the importing nation.

We urge expanded trade with Japan for all agricultural products. We recommend that Farm Bureau support legislation that requires Japan to remove restrictions on the importation of all U.S. agricultural commodities.

We support sanction reform legislation that would require Congress and the Administration to conduct a thorough analysis on the impact that sanctions could have on farmers and ranchers before considering the imposition of sanctions.

We urge the USDA to continue to seek acceptance of rice varieties containing Liberty Link traits in all markets.

Agricultural Imports

303

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 252)

We oppose the importation of any agricultural commodities and related products when they are in direct competition with our domestic production, thereby lowering farm prices.

We support the interests of our individual commodity producers and recommend immediate relief through appropriate measures from the adverse effects on domestic prices resulting from the dumping of imports.

We support the Administration's authority to retaliate against countries that use unfair trade practices through the use of such retaliatory measures as the Super 301 Petition and expanded Export Enhancement Program.

A temporary increase in import quotas of any commodity or other measures which have the effect of lowering domestic prices should be opposed.

We support legislation that provides reasonable, annual growth rate limits on imported textiles.

We support implementation of import safeguard provisions to protect the domestic cotton industry from large amounts of imported cotton textile products from China and other foreign countries.

We oppose the importation of sugar in the form of "stuffed molasses" or any other form that circumvents trade agreements, congressional intent, or USDA regulations.

We support tariffs on crawfish and shrimp imported into the U.S. and any other assessments and fees for promotion and regulating imports.

We oppose increasing the 1.532 million ton sugar import threshold to provide room for additional Tariff Rate Quota (TRQ) imports within the U.S. sugar program.

We request that USDA increase efforts to track and quantify U.S. imports of sugar-containing products (SCP) and pursue changes so SCP are counted as part of the TRQ.

We support programs to utilize surplus quantities of sugar into non-food uses.

We support significantly increased sampling and inspections of imported food products at point of entry. Imported food products should be subject to the same or equivalent inspection, sanitary, quality, labeling and residue standards as domestic products.

Trade Negotiations and Agreements

304

(Reference AFBF Policy Nos. 251 and 252)

Important provisions of the World Trade Organization (WTO) have been ignored, thus eroding the viability of

the agreement. We oppose disproportionate penalties against production agriculture for the loss of any revenue due to the signing of the WTO agreement.

We support the concept embodied in the U.S. proposal that all trade-distorting government subsidies be subjected to progressive and substantial reductions worldwide. The time-frame for this phase-out and the program coverage will depend on what other countries are prepared to undertake.

We support that fair trade must require the WTO to have labor and environmental standards no less than those imposed on the U.S. producer.

We support harmonization of labor standards internationally that U.S. producers have to abide by under OSHA in the U.S.

We support national and international uniformity in pesticide usage and residue standards.

We support the objectives of the Codex Alimentarius Commission in providing social labor and environmental reforms and standards based on U.S. regulations through the SPS Agreement.

We support the coupling of these trade objectives as part of all future U.S. agricultural trade negotiations.

We will oppose any unilateral, bilateral, or multilateral action by the U.S. to eliminate import restrictions and subsidies without commitments of equal proportions by other countries based upon comparable support prices for those countries using support prices. We oppose inclusion of sugar in bilateral and regional trade agreements and support negotiating sugar trade as part of multilateral trade negotiations in the WTO. Countries affected by the WTO, however, must function at the same program level costs prior to increased or decreased commitments of equal proportion. We support Farm Bureau leadership advocating a "fair-market" concept for moving American commodities into markets instead of only advocating a "free-market" concept.

We support a "REQUEST/OFFER" solution to the Aggregate Measurement of Support (AMS) instead of the "FORMULA" approach in negotiations during WTO trade talks.

We support U.S. trade negotiations that eliminate export subsidies, reduced interest rates, and other methods of support provided by STEs to circumvent their trade obligations.

We support the philosophy of the "dollarization" of Latin America to give the U.S. producer an equitable position in international trade.

Failure to achieve substantial and progressive reductions in equally important foreign trade barriers and subsidies would result in continuing our support for:

1. The retention, expansion, and aggressive use of the EEP targeted at all subsidized European Community (EC) exports that compete with U.S. products in world markets;
2. The retention of the U.S. Meat Import Act;
3. The retention of domestic farm programs supported by Farm Bureau;
4. The establishment of vigorous export programs for raw and value-added U.S. agricultural products to gain a greater share of the world market; the strengthening of programs to aid foreign customers in the financing of the CCC's revolving fund; the making available of Export-Import Bank funds to agricultural export sales;
5. The use of aggressive, agricultural market-development programs utilizing sales missions, innovative barter programs, and expanded funding for overseas promotion programs; and
6. The expanded use of PL 480 and GSM 102 and 103 as a food aid and market development tool.

We support TRQs that provide the same protection as provided by Section 22 import quotas of the Agricultural Adjustment Act.

Commodity support prices in the U.S. should only be reduced when it can be assured that the multilateral reductions are being made on a basis and in a manner which is both fair and equitable to U.S. producers. We recommend that all future U.S. trade negotiations oppose reductions in U.S. agricultural commodity loan rates, program payments, and other support mechanisms until negotiating countries reduce their support levels to a rate equal to that provided to U.S. producers. We recommend that all foreign export subsidies be properly identified and completely eliminated.

Discretion should be urged upon the government not to seek indiscriminate proliferation of bilateral trade agreements which might interfere unduly with the workings of a market-oriented agriculture.

We recommend that Farm Bureau work with Congress to initiate the development of a reciprocal trade agreement with U.S. beef trading partners.

We recommend more research on the effects NAFTA has had on all agricultural commodities. We request that import-sensitive commodities be exempted from bilateral and regional trade agreements.

We urge that no additional sugar access, above the current U.S. sugar TRQ, be provided to countries as part of the Free Trade of the Americas Agreement (FTAA), Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), or other free trade agreements.

We oppose the CAFTA in its present form.

The EC and Japan should be pressured to increase their imports from the developing economies. This would improve trade balances and the opportunity for U.S. farm export income.

We support the use of long-term equitable agreements between the U.S., Japan, and other countries without maximum limits on the quantities of U.S. exports and agricultural commodities.

Through input received by the commodity-specific advisory committees, we recommend that Farm Bureau monitor ongoing trade negotiations and take appropriate actions in the best interests of Louisiana agriculture.

We support greater utilization of the blue box trade category for U.S. agricultural programs.

U.S. forestland owners face formidable competition from Canada's provincial treasuries. Canada's provinces subsidize lumber production by selling timber to Canadian lumber companies at noncompetitive prices for a fraction of the timber's market value. Artificially low provincial timber prices, minimum harvesting restrictions, and other practices encourage overharvesting and overproduction in Canada to the detriment of U.S. industry, forestry landowners, and loggers. Subsidized Canadian lumber imports unfairly compete with U.S. lumber companies,

affecting thousands of jobs and driving down the value of forestlands. Currently, the U.S.-Canadian Softwood Lumber Agreement has expired and should be renegotiated. U.S. trade laws should be fully enforced so that forestry landowners and U.S. manufacturers don't suffer from Canadian subsidies. If allowed to continue, Canada's unfair timber pricing practices will severely undermine the value of U.S. forestlands and the associated industrial infrastructure.

Since foreign subsidies are not addressed in bilateral free trade agreements, we support greater emphasis on multilateral negotiations in the WTO to achieve a level playing field for all agricultural producers.

Role of the USDA

305

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 462)

We recommend that Farm Bureau adopt as a high priority an effort to direct the structure, role, and function of USDA to meet the future needs of farmers and ranchers with safeguards so that USDA will not become a threat to farmers' and ranchers' ability to produce or infringe on their right to own and use private property.

We recommend that USDA-APHIS increase sampling, testing, and lower tolerance thresholds and require greater traceability of imports coming into the US, consistent with domestic food safety requirements. We also recommend that USDA-APHIS do more to stop entry of invasive species and disease by stepping up border check-point inspections, sampling and upgrade testing methods so the latest science is used to test for evasive species, contamination and diseases on foreign products entering the US.

We recommend that USDA provide toll-free telephone service in county office service centers.

We support continuing mandatory USDA commodity acreage certification if farm programs shift away from use of base acres.

Natural Disaster Programs

306

(Reference AFBF Policy Nos. 239, 415, and 225)

We recommend that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) work with the LDAF to provide farmers with immediate assistance after hurricanes/natural disasters to provide items such as feed, hay, water, electricity, and fuel to prevent death of livestock, poultry, and aquaculture and the loss of agricultural crops and commodity inventories.

We recommend that EWP be modified to assist farmers in disaster-declared areas in rebuilding and constructing new protection levees and restoring land due to damage from debris, contamination, and severe erosion. We recommend land and levee restoration and rebuilding programs remove funding caps and fund land and levee restoration and building based on approval process of fair cost estimates. We also recommend that long-term, low-interest loans be available for farmers and landowners working to restore their farm land and levee protection systems.

We strongly recommend that property owners/tenants be allowed to return to their property as soon as possible in order to protect it from further destruction.

We support the appropriation of funds to compensate producers for disaster-related crop losses as long as it does not adversely affect current farm programs.

We recommend that Farm Bureau seek new avenues of relief from disaster programs that address the problem of prevented plantings as a result of adverse weather conditions. Farm Bureau supports quality-reduction payments being mandatory in any future disaster legislation. We recommend that Farm Bureau support the use of producer-established yields rather than parish or state average yields for the basis of disaster assistance. We support the ability to correct a sweet potato crop yield derived from a crop insurance loss determination with a proven yield in cases when the crop insurance yield determination unfairly increases a farmer's yield and disqualifies the farm from adhoc disaster assistance. We oppose requiring crop insurance to be eligible for any disaster assistance. We oppose disaster payments being made in the form of increased levels of coverage for those producers carrying crop insurance with eligible losses.

We support using average crop prices in disaster loss payment calculations instead of crop insurance prices in counties or parishes where crop insurance is not available.

We request FSA Ag Credit to establish uniform guidelines and eligibility requirements to cover production and disaster loans to farmers and recommend that financial records or tax returns from the previous year be adequate to establish a need.

FSA Ag Credit disaster loans should be governed by the following principles:

1. Any interest subsidy should be recaptured if the farm is voluntarily sold during the term of the loan;
2. All lending institutions which provide agricultural funding should make every effort to reamortize or extend agricultural loans on an individual basis in order to assist farmers affected by natural disasters to stay in business.
3. Borrowers should not be allowed to use the proceeds from a disaster loan for expansion; and
4. The final decision on the loan should be left to the local FSA Ag Credit county committees.

We strongly support a provision in FSA Ag Credit emergency loan procedures that would delete the requirement that the loan be secured by hard collateral or first mortgage for farmers in business less than five years. We further recommend that FSA Ag Credit emergency loan regulations delete the requirement that there be no other source of financing before FSA Ag Credit eligibility is established.

We recommend that FSA use accurate weather information obtained from multiple sites in each parish when administering disaster aid programs.

We also recommend that the Extension Service work with FSA in establishing multiple rainfall collection sites in the agricultural production areas of a parish to reflect a more accurate report on rainfall data.

Agricultural loans under the Small Business Administration (SBA) should be granted the same emergency credit provisions available to FSA Ag Credit borrowers under the agricultural debt restructuring programs.

We support restructuring the current permanent disaster program in the farm bill to determine losses on an individual crop instead of making loss determinations on a whole farm basis. Funding for this program should be obtained from the crop insurance program. The buy-up insurance programs should be utilized to cover the production risks not covered by the disaster program.

As a result of the 2010-2011 drought, many of our livestock producers who suffered losses to their pasture and hay lands were unable to secure assistance through the USDA's forage assistance program, due to quality issues. We request LFBF work to address producer qualification criteria for USDA assistance in the event of a natural disaster.

We request appropriate measures be taken by our delegation to eliminate all discriminatory conditions for disaster program assistance participation for any livestock producer impacted by a natural disaster. We support elimination of all discriminatory provisions controlling eligibility and participation in any disaster or government program. Furthermore, we recommend that LFBF request the State FSA Committee to review producer applications in a timely manner.

Crop Insurance

307

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 225)

We recommend that the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC) study committee continue to review all aspects of the Federal Crop Insurance Program, including abuses, and make recommendations on ways to improve the entire program so that it will be equitable to all producers. We support self-insured crop insurance programs.

A restructured federal crop insurance law will recognize that eventually the crop insurance program will replace the need for disaster assistance. Savings resulting from elimination of disaster programs can be redirected to a premium credit to the producers.

We favor the development of insurance to address individual risks.

We strongly support the concept of costs-of-production insurance and the development of such policies for all commodities.

We recommend that the Risk Management Agency use the same criteria – dry weight yields – for determining losses as is used for determining the APH.

We support the implementation of crop insurance replant coverage for cotton.

We request that the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) use all available technology and information sources in establishing acreage yield and production estimates and that this improved information be used in a more current system to calculate T-yields.

We oppose unmarketable field-damaged potatoes from being counted in production totals and loss determinations. We support a permanent sweet potato crop insurance program to be offered to all eligible sweet potato producers.

We support a sweet potato crop insurance program that insures the value of No. 1 fresh and process-grade sweet potatoes with coverage for sweet potatoes in storage for 60 days after harvest. We support revised sweet potato crop insurance yields for farmers selling complete fields to a processor.

We recommend that any crop losses or yield reductions that occur to crops in due to an oil spill not be considered "man-made" losses so these crop losses are not disqualified from eligibility to collect crop insurance indemnification. We further recommend that the Risk Management Agency (RMA) clarify loss adjustment procedures for oil residue impacted regions. We support crop insurance coverage for crop losses caused by crop sales prohibitions resulting from the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act regulations where a crop is prohibited from being sold.

We recommend that crop insurance claims be paid when a levee is intentionally breached by authorities to save a levee, community or region.

Farm Service Agency

308

(Reference AFBF Policy Nos. 462 and 458)

1. We recommend that Extension Service personnel again be allowed to serve as ex-officio members of FSA state and county committees.
2. We recommend that no less than five FSA state committeemen represent Louisiana.
3. We favor the current individual office structure presently used by parish FSA, NRCS, and Rural Development agencies.
4. We recommend that a member in a policymaking position in a farm organization not be prohibited from serving as an FSA committeeman.
5. We recommend that July 15 be established as the uniform FSA and crop insurance final crop reporting date for sugarcane.
6. We recommend that FSA certify actual farm sugar yields.
7. We recommend that April 15 be established as the uniform FSA and crop insurance final crop reporting date for wheat and oats.

Agricultural Reports

309

(Reference AFBF Policy Nos. 455 and 462)

We encourage the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) Cotton Division to send cotton classification data directly to farmers, if requested. We urge classing offices to maintain their emphasis on timely, accurate, and cost-effective service.

We request that a report be developed and printed annually which shows a comparison of subsidies received by foreign competitors on per-unit commodity production and that imported farm-related equipment subsidies be included in the report.

Commodity Promotion

310

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 456)

The safeguards should provide:

1. Only those persons who contribute monies to the respective programs shall be eligible to serve on the boards which administer such programs.
2. The program should allow a listing of the contributors to the program for recognition and also a listing of noncontributors for the purpose of education by a contact committee.
3. We oppose a mandatory referendum conducted every five years on the cotton checkoff; however, we do support the right to petition for a referendum by a substantial percentage of farmers.

Conservation Programs

311

(Reference AFBF Policy Nos. 462, 235, 236, 237, 241, and 528)

We recommend that a greater priority be established in and ranking and funding of NRCS funds for local county projects and that soil and water conservation districts be allowed to control and allocate a greater percentage of NRCS funds. We recommend that the NRCS, in cooperation with the soil and water conservation districts, reevaluate the federal EQIP Program so prior participation will be considered a negative factor in priority ranking. We support making certain precision agricultural practices that benefit conservation eligible for EQIP funding. Emphasis should be directed at the most critical resource problems. Programs should be directed locally by elected soil and water conservation district supervisors.

We recommend that funds be increased according to increasing costs and made available to carry out practices offered in the program. Greenhouse and specialty crop operations should be included. We recommend including drainage practices under EQIP. We recommend that composting of agricultural waste be considered an approved EQIP practice. We support additional staffing options for local soil conservation districts that handle greater workloads for additional EQIP projects.

We support funding the Conservation Stewardship Program at the levels determined in the 2008 Farm Bill.

We support the Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative and the Working Wetlands Initiative and encourage eligible farmers to participate.

Drainage districts should be exempt under the commenced determination portion of the Food Security Act of 1985.

We recommend the provision of adequate local, state, and federal funds to finance soil mapping and publication of soil survey information.

Agricultural Credit

312

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 415)

We recommend that all farmers be treated equally regardless of income, race, color, sex, and creed. We will oppose all efforts to limit access to the money market by major credit suppliers, to limit competition, or to artificially set interest rates by government edict.

We oppose a moratorium on farm foreclosures.

We strongly support the establishment of a federal tax-exempt bond program, along with any needed federal regulatory changes, to provide American farmers with funding to purchase property and facilities, thereby enabling them to capture additional value from the sale of their commodities by funding greater vertical integration.

1. FSA Ag Credit

We support:

- (a) Adequate funding for the full crop year, as well as competent supervision.
- (b) Expediting loan processing to allow farmers ample time to make planting decisions, FSA Ag Credit direct and 90/10 guaranteed loan applications being approved or disapproved within 30 days, and approved loans being funded within 30 days.
- (c) No term limitations on direct and guaranteed loan programs.
- (d) Any funds provided by FSA Ag Credit to purchase farmland being loaned only to citizens of the U.S.
- (e) Farmer-elected committee persons being involved in the approval process of FSA Ag Credit agricultural loans.
- (f) Measures being taken to stop FSA Ag Credit from lending monies to agricultural operations that are too far gone and have no hope of recovery.

2. Small Business Administration

We urge the SBA to assist their borrowers with debt restructuring and loan guarantees.

3. Commercial Banks

We encourage lenders to use their flexibility to restructure existing distressed agricultural loans wherever possible.

Banking regulations should provide the opportunity for credit-worthy borrowers to be able to move to another lender when banks are closed. The federal government should extend its special guarantee program that guarantees credit-worthy farmers and ranchers the option to move to another lender if their lender is closed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or a state regulatory agency.

4. Farm Credit System

We recommend continued supportive efforts for the Farm Credit Program. We should take the lead in developing a long-term plan for its survival. We further recommend that the elected boards and their membership have complete decision-making authority over any restructuring or possible mergers. Any changes in the system should adhere to the following principles:

- (a) Protection of the value of member-borrower stock.
- (b) Pursuit of meaningful and effective restructuring of member-borrower loans and not forgiving debt.
- (c) Prompt infusion of federal government capital as needed.

NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

FOLLOWING ARE LFBF'S POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO AFBF. THESE STATEMENTS, IN ADDITION TO THE REFERENCED AFBF POLICIES, CONSTITUTE OUR POLICY AND POSITIONS ON ISSUES RELATIVE TO NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. SEE THE REFERENCED SECTIONS OF THE POLICIES FOR 2013 ADOPTED AT THE 94th ANNUAL MEETING OF AFBF, JANUARY 2013.

Judiciary 401

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 107)

Congress should enact the legislation necessary to curb the ever-increasing powers of federal judges and the Justice Department which usurp the powers of state and local governments.

Elections 402

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 103)

We oppose the redrawing of state legislative districts to achieve specific percentages of any group of voters.

National Security 403

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 179)

We support the selective service registration system to ensure an adequate and immediate manpower source. In the event that our military defense manpower becomes dangerously low, there should be no delay in reinstating the draft. We support all efforts to strengthen the National Guard and Reserves.

We oppose any legislation or action that would permit the unionization of any branch of the U.S. Armed Services.

Eminent Domain 404

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 535)

Compensation should be paid for any damages which result from loss of or reduction of access to navigable waters.

We believe the property owner should also receive the value of the property to the individual operation plus the consideration of the production ability of the property.

We support establishment of a civilian review board, independent of government agencies, to which property owners could appeal condemnation decisions before initiating proceedings in the courts.

We support legislation that protects privately owned agricultural land and facilities.

Fiscal and Monetary Policy 405

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 417)

The goal of monetary policy should be general price level stability. Should the Federal Reserve System fail to maintain sound discretionary monetary policies, we will support legislation to instruct the Federal Reserve System to achieve a specified rate of growth in the stock of money consistent with real economic growth, productivity, and general price level stability.

Taxation 406

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 439)

1. Income Tax

We oppose increases in federal income tax or any other taxes from being made retroactive.

We support:

- (a) A federal tax amnesty program with the yield of such a program to be applied against the national debt.
- (b) Carry-forward of the full value of unused investment or other tax credits earned prior to tax reform.
- (c) The exemption of CCC generic certificates from Form 1099B filing requirements.
- (d) Legislation to allow for the full tax deduction of IRA contributions when used as a retirement plan even though the spouse is already participating in a retirement plan.

We oppose:

- (a) A mandatory requirement for a contemporaneous mileage log on vehicles.
- (b) The recapture of depreciation of installment sales as ordinary income in the year of sale for depreciated assets.

Bonding and Bankruptcy 407

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 416)

When anyone files for bankruptcy and a trustee is appointed, the trustee should be required to cooperate with any party who has a financial interest in the bankruptcy.

We support an amendment to the federal bankruptcy law to protect the interests of landlords in cases where a tenant files for bankruptcy.

Water Issues 408

(Reference AFBF Policy Nos. 545-550)

1. Permitting

- (a) Permit requests to the Corps of Engineers will be acted upon and applicants notified of their decision within 30 days of application.
 - (b) Permits not acted upon in the time frame stated will automatically be granted.
 - (c) Private landowner permit procedures/policies should not be more restrictive than those utilized for public lands.
 - (d) Burden of proof shall be upon the agency, organization, or individual objecting to the landowners' proposed use of their property. Permits should be modified, delayed, or denied only if the permitting agency can prove with conclusive evidence that the proposed activity will cause adverse impact.
 - (e) The three alternatives used in sequencing – avoidance, minimizing impact, and mitigation – shall have equal value.
2. Federal Agency Authority
- (a) We urge Congress to pass laws restricting the Department of Interior, EPA, and Corps of Engineers' authority under the CWA and Section 404 permits.
 - (b) We request congressional oversight and overview of federal agencies that write rules and regulations impacting production agriculture.
 - (c) We support finalization and implementation of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's proposed counterpart regulations to modify and delineate consultations for EPA pesticide registrations.
 - (d) We strongly oppose any stricter interpretation of regulations concerning the Clean Water Act and the Clean Air Act.

Grain Standards and Pricing

409

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 356)

We urge the continuation of state and federal grain inspection employing only highly qualified personnel. We also recommend a system of periodic checks on all grain inspection.

We recommend that FSA use the actual loan value determined by sampling in determining loans regarding on-farm stored commodities.

Energy

410

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 402)

We urge that the U.S. negotiate agreements individually with Mexico and other nations for the purchase of oil and gas.

We request that an environmental impact statement be made prior to the diversion of hydrocarbons from intrastate pipelines to interstate pipelines.

We support legislation to increase the production of ethanol, biodiesel, wind, and solar energy and remove the restrictions on domestic production of oil, natural gas, and coal.

We oppose mandatory cap-and-trade provisions and a carbon tax that would negatively impact production agriculture.

Farm Labor

411

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 135)

We recommend that DOL officials be restricted from entering a farm without first contacting the farmer and having the appropriate legal instruments to do so.

We support efforts to reform the H-2A program. We oppose mandatory ergonomic standards for production agriculture and the agricultural processing industry.

We support elimination of the H-2A newspaper advertising requirements that require advertisements in three newspapers, including the Sunday edition, and permit the electronic job registry to satisfy the job advertisement requirements for domestic worker recruitment for the H-2A program. We support a new agricultural work permit Blue Card program for undocumented farm workers and a Contract Based and At-Will Visa Program for filling agricultural job vacancies with foreign Visa workers. We support Contract and At-Will Visa programs that continue to operate to offset agricultural labor shortages and oppose limits that would prevent a farmer from being able to fill job vacancies due to a lack of available visas. If agricultural foreign worker visa programs are adopted with an established limit on the number of available visas, we support that the agricultural visa programs have an automatic escalator that automatically increases the number of available visas when the visa limit is reached to prevent crop losses while a new limit is determined.

We strongly recommend that AFBF remain committed to legislative reform of the H-2A foreign agricultural worker program and support legislation that replaces the Adverse Effect Wage Rate (AEWR) with a market-based wage rate that does not increase workers' private right of action against agricultural employers. We recommend that a long-term legislative solution be found to solve the 66,000 cap on the H-2B program.

We oppose all attempts to restrict or repeal the Farm-Related CDL Exemption.

We oppose all attempts to alter or repeal the Agricultural Overtime Exemption.

We do not oppose E-Verify if verification accuracy improves and amendments provide either adequate reform to the H-2A program or a viable foreign agricultural guest worker program.

We support a requirement that the State Workforce Agency verify the legal immigration status of workers before they can be referred to an agricultural employer.

We support legislation to stop or repeal the H-2B Process Rule and H-2B Final Wage Rate Rule.

We support modifying the Security Plan for the Port of Greater Baton Rouge to permit drivers to deliver grain to the Port of Baton Rouge Grain Elevator without requiring a TWIC card.

We oppose Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration guidance or interpretations that would make share rent farmers ineligible to use the farm related CDL exemption.

We oppose Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration guidance or interpretations that would classify commodity shipments as "interstate commerce" if delivery of the commodity to the first point of sale was made within the state.

We oppose Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration guidance or interpretations that would classify farm equipment and or farm implements as a "Commercial Motor Vehicle."

Railroads **412**

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 127)

We support the necessary legislation to prove that in case of repair, discarded materials, including ties and rails, be properly disposed of within a reasonable time from railroad rights-of-ways.

Rural Utilities **413**

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 401)

We urge efforts on the part of both private companies and rural electric cooperatives to reach agreements that will be in the best long-term interest of all concerned. Duplication of services is not in the public interest.

We recommend that charges for running electrical lines to a farm be lowered and that the owner be reimbursed for additions to these lines, without a time limitation on reimbursement.

We recommend that utility companies maintain electrical utilities all the way to the meter, including materials.

Health **414**

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 153)

We support:

1. Every possible effort to effect cost management while providing accessible high-quality health care.
2. The development of legislation that will lead to changing our present health care delivery system through the following:
 - (a) Cost incentive/rewards (providers, insurance companies, and consumers).
 - (b) Protection against monopolies.
 - (c) Periodic review of regulations.
3. The development and implementation of programs to provide incentives for consumers to practice wellness and disease prevention.
4. Residency programs to provide postgraduate family physician training away from major metropolitan-based medical training centers.
5. Privately funded optional care delivery systems such as health maintenance organizations.
6. Legislation to require the use of the generic as well as the trade name on prescription drugs.
7. Closer working relationships between organization of family physicians, medical societies, and health agencies.
8. A requirement that drug manufacturers label all inert as well as active ingredients contained in medicines.
9. Third-party payer recognition for payment of outpatient treatment and preventive measures.
10. Federal government incentives to the private sector for providing long-term health care.
11. Legislation to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Mandatory Health Insurance.)

We oppose:

Federal government interference with private enterprise by subsidizing professional medical services.
Healthcare legislation applicable to U.S. Citizens which does not apply equally to members of Congress.

Vocational Training **415**

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 146)

We urge vocational education departments to regularly reevaluate and improve their programs of study to provide up-to-date and modernized vocational educational programs and promote the development of urban agriculture. We further request the state to provide the necessary financial assistance for this endeavor.

Special work permits should be granted to allow special wage rates to be paid to students under work-experience programs.

Cooperative Extension Service **416**

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 457)

Frequent consultations on matters of common interest have proved beneficial to many state Farm Bureaus and Extension Service leaders. We recommend continuation of this practice.

We support the concept of area specialists.

We support the 4-H Club program and oppose lowering the traditionally high standards for 4-H projects.

We urge the full annual funding of our land-grant universities.

Freedom of Information Act **417**

(Reference AFBF Policy No. 105)

We oppose any additional Freedom of Information laws on the federal level and request that AFBF notify states if any such legislation is proposed.

- USDA Census Survey** 418
(Reference AFBF Policy No. 455)
We recommend that the federal government focus on net farm income, not gross farm income. We oppose any census that reports only gross farm income.
- Animal Agriculture** 419
(Reference AFBF Policy No. 301-317)
We recommend that AFBF develop and provide educational programs and materials to the state Farm Bureaus to assist in informing the public on animal agriculture.
- Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP)** 420
We recommend strict accountability and oversight for the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) to prevent waste, fraud, and abuse.
- Offshore Deepwater Drilling Moratorium** 421
We urge that LFBF oppose the moratorium against offshore deepwater drilling.
- Wireless Broadband Network** 422
We recommend that the FCC closely monitor any high-powered cellular system proposal that could interfere with Global Positioning Systems (GPS) that are critical to precision agriculture.
- Animal Welfare** 423
We oppose legislation that would give animal rights organizations the right to establish standards for the raising, marketing, handling, feeding, housing or transportation of livestock, including equines, poultry, aquaculture and fur-bearing animals. We oppose any laws which would mandate specific farming practices in livestock production.
- Fertilizer Pricing** 424
We recommend AFBF study the factors influencing fertilizer price market movement and develop fertilizer price risk-management tools and strategies.
- Right to Bear Arms** 425
We fully support the 2nd Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America. We support the individuals citizen's right to keep and bear arms and oppose all efforts to infringe on that right.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR THE FEDERATION SHALL BE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE LFBF BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR THE INSURANCE COMPANIES SHALL BE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE APPROPRIATE FARM BUREAU INSURANCE COMPANIES BOARDS OF DIRECTORS.

Membership

501

1. We recommend that Farm Bureau continue its nonmember insured check beginning on February 1 in order to assist in the membership drive.
2. We recommend that the State Office continue sending out the first membership billing notice and that all returns be sent to the parish offices. We recommend that parish participation be optional.
3. We recommend that the membership letter sent to new members on the Group B list be re-worded and delete "having overlooked payment of dues" and of "not renewing the dues" as these members were not previously billed nor have they paid dues in the past.
4. We recommend the continuation of the current Farm Bureau membership dues structure.
5. We recommend that the last two weeks of February continue to be designated to emphasize membership acquisition.
6. We request the State Board to continue enforcing the language in the Bylaws requiring that an individual's membership be written in the parish in which he resides or farms.
7. We recommend that LFBF utilize cost effective correspondence, such as appropriate mailing selection and the use of email, due to higher postage and the wide acceptance of digital communication.
8. We support the state office processing the membership at the state office and then remitting the parish membership back to the parish office.
9. We recommend that LFBF members' benefits be published in the public media sector and that LFBF continue to find avenues to market member benefits to a wider demographic focusing on the non-agricultural sector.
10. We recommend that LFBF add a line, commodity number, and description name on the agricultural interest of the membership renewal for "hay."
11. We recommend that the member number be shown on the member letter "C" to members who have not yet paid dues.
12. We request that LFBF institute a program giving members the option of automatically drafting membership dues from a member's bank account on an annual basis.

Annual Meeting

502

1. We recommend that the State Board continue to be authorized to select convention sites ten years in advance and further recommend that the convention not be scheduled during the 4th of July.
2. We recommend that the annual meeting continue to be held in one hotel under one roof if possible and ask that the State Board check into a system to guarantee parking for Farm Bureau members attending the annual meeting. However, the Farm Bureau may go back to its rotation system throughout the state, if necessary, even if it means using more than one hotel.
3. We request that products utilizing Louisiana farm commodities be served at all Farm Bureau functions.
4. We recommend that the State Board continue to monitor the feasibility of allowing agriculturally related vendors to set up booths at the Farm Bureau convention with proceeds used to offset the cost of the convention.
5. Letters should continue to be sent to parish presidents prior to convention notifying them of resolution subcommittee assignments and the time of the resolutions and commodity conference sessions.
6. Resolutions to be considered by the voting delegates should be submitted to the State Office by June 1. These resolutions should be compiled in a packet and mailed to each parish office prior to the convention.
7. Letters should also be mailed to each member of the commodity committees giving them the time of the commodity conferences.
8. We recommend that major commodity conferences always be scheduled to avoid conflict of producer participation when possible.
9. We request that any recommendations regarding existing or new policies provided by Farm Bureau staff be sent to parish presidents upon request prior to the annual convention.
10. We recommend that the disposition of all resolutions submitted by the parishes and acted upon by the resolutions subcommittees continue to be made available to the Resolutions Committee and again at the open session of voting delegates.
11. We request that the Resolutions Committee reports continue to retain the language that was deleted in the text of the resolutions and that it is denoted by a strike-through.
12. We request that an audited financial statement be made available to parish presidents, upon request, prior to the convention.
13. We recommend that candidates for statewide offices who are invited to address the convention delegates be invited to a session to be designated by the State Board.

14. We request that the Awards Book and rules be sent to the parishes in the fall following the annual convention. We recommend that a Scrapbook Workshop/Idea Exchange be held at the State Secretary Conference where a representative from each of the 13 categories would present and explain goals, give examples, and answer questions from the parishes.
15. We recommend that the Area Field Services Directors continue to review the program areas awarded each parish in their district to recognize any oversights.
16. We recommend that the Field Services Directors meet with the parish secretaries and/or Awards Book Committees as soon as possible before next year's convention to review any additions, deletions, changes, etc., to the Awards Book and YF&R Award of Merit.
17. We recommend that the parish that wins the President's Trophy continue to make their scrapbook available for viewing at the convention so other parishes can learn from their experience.
18. We request that under the "Policy Development" section of the Awards Book, the requirement to develop at least two policies on parish, state, and national issues be changed to only one.
19. We request that following the Annual Meeting that all changes to the policy book be compiled in a letter and mailed to all parish presidents and members of the state board of directors.

Qualifications and Terms of Office for State Officers, State Board Members, and Voting Delegates **503**

1. State officers, State Board members, and voting delegates must be actively engaged in agricultural production.
2. Farm Bureau officers shall not receive any salary for offices held without the approval of the voting delegates.
3. We request that the vote tally of candidates for each office be announced after each election.

Commodity Committees **504**

1. Chairmen of all commodity divisions are urged to attend necessary Board meetings, and their expenses for such attendance will be paid.
2. We request that all commodity divisions mail an agenda with their meeting notices so that important or critical proposals can be discussed, studied, and approved by the respective parish committees and boards.
3. Notification of commodity committee meetings will be mailed to parish presidents and commodity committee chairmen seven days prior to date of meeting.

Youth Program **505**

1. We require all parish Youth Program contestants to be from Farm Bureau families and that no contestant be a professional. If selected as the winner, especially as queen, we request that Farm Bureau activities precede any other activity. Parishes shall continue to formulate the rules for the individual parish contests provided these rules are not in conflict with state rules.
2. We recommend the continuation of the Youth Conference. We urge that the major emphasis be placed on good government, careers in agriculture, and other topics of interest to youth.

Louisiana Farm Bureau News **506**

Membership dues to the Farm Bureau shall include a subscription to the *Louisiana Farm Bureau News*.

Farm Bureau Meetings and Correspondence **507**

1. We recommend that the Farm Bureau Federation, its committees, program departments, and service departments hold all meetings within the state, whenever possible, in an effort to utilize the resources of the state and allow the state to benefit from the monies spent. This is not inclusive of incentive trips or those meetings held in conjunction with out-of-state committees or boards.
2. A schedule of Farm Bureau meetings and activities should be provided to the parishes. A schedule should also be sent to the AgCenter and LDAF in order to avoid scheduling conflicts.
3. We recommend that when the State Board makes a decision affecting a particular parish, said parish shall be notified prior to its release to the news media.
4. We recommend that the minutes of the Federation Board meetings reflect the vote on each action taken when the vote is not unanimous.
5. We recommend that a copy of the Farm Bureau "Legislative Report" continue to be sent to the parish offices for their personnel to make it available to their respective board members.
6. We recommend that LFBF offer each parish the option of receiving all federation correspondence through e-mail to eliminate all unnecessary paper mailing.

American Farm Bureau Convention Delegates **508**

State voting delegates to the AFBF convention should be the elected officers. Additional delegates and alternates should be selected from the State Board.

Leadership Conference **509**

We recommend that Leadership Conferences be held bi-annually on a rotating basis within each Farm Bureau district. We also recommend that all insurance agency managers be invited to attend the Leadership Conference.

Voting Eligibility at Commodity Conferences 510

Eligibility for voting at commodity conferences is restricted to active producers or any representative of an active producer who is a member of Farm Bureau and a resident of the parish he is appointed to represent.

Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee 511

1. We encourage each parish Farm Bureau to establish a Young Farmers and Ranchers Advisory Committee so that young farm families or individuals can more actively participate in Farm Bureau.
2. We recommend that a Leadership Conference for Young Farmers and Ranchers be held each year and that it be held in North Louisiana at least every three years, contingent on the availability of accommodations.
3. We support the 35-year maximum age limit for participation in the Young Farmers and Ranchers Program.
4. We recommend that the state Farm Bureau and state Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee take a more active part in the organization, reactivation, and retention of parish Young Farmers and Ranchers Committees.
5. We request that Farm Bureau support the use of computers in all contests so we can easily down-load Young Farmers and Ranchers applications from the Farm Bureau website to be able to apply for them, print them out, and turn them into the State Office.
6. We request changing the YF&R contestant application due date from November 1 to March 1.

Incoming WATS Line 512

We recommend that the incoming Federation WATS line be used only by State Board members, parish presidents, state Women's Executive Committee and district directors, state Young Farmers and Ranchers officers and district directors, state commodity committee chairmen, and state AITC Committee officers and district directors.

Use of Farm Bureau Name 513

The Farm Bureau name shall not be used in connection with any undertaking that is not owned or licensed by Farm Bureau and without the approval of the voting delegates.

Farm Bureau Insurance 514

1. We recommend that informational sessions regarding Farm Bureau programs and activities be included in the insurance agents' statewide meetings. We further recommend that all agents be invited to attend these sessions which will be administered by the Farm Bureau State Board of Directors.
2. We recommend that the district sales managers meet with the parish president and the agency manager at least once a year to discuss problems, solutions, and accomplishments of the parish insurance operation.
3. We recommend that insurance agents, agency managers, sales staff, and other service departments be allowed to select meeting sites – whether in state or out of state – that meet their needs with regard to objective, accommodations, and costs.
4. We recommend that the Farm Bureau Insurance Companies continue their attempts to find solutions to add a general environmental policy to the umbrella policy.
5. We recommend that LFBF ask AFBF to look into the possibility of consolidating the Farm Bureau Insurance Companies in each state to reduce the potential risks to each individual company.
6. We recommend that the study committee, which was appointed, continue to look at the services being offered by the Louisiana Farm Bureau Insurance Companies, including homeowners, automobile, liability, etc., in an effort to diversify risks and lower premiums.
7. We request that all Agents solicit Farm Bureau Membership through their parish office explaining the benefits of membership and encourage the purchase of said membership upon the selling of Louisiana Citizens policies.
8. We recommend that LFBF review the current Accidental Death Policy offered to members, in particular, issues involving the seat belt exclusion.

Agricultural Tourism 515

We recommend that Farm Bureau support a statewide program for Agri-Tourism.

Farm Bureau Services 516

1. We recommend that the Public Relations Department continue to develop multimedia materials for the parish Farm Bureaus to promote the organization and its activities. We also request that these materials be updated annually.
2. We recommend that a professional team with members from Farm Bureau and the LDAF be established to respond to critical issues which arise in the news media.
3. As urban populations become larger, the need to tell agriculture's story of the economic impact of this sector of our economy on the entire state becomes more critical. Farm Bureau should develop a plan to inform the nonfarming public of the farmer's role in society. Farm Bureau should act as a catalyst for pro-farmer groups such as the LDAF, agricultural service companies, agricultural chemical companies, seed companies, fertilizer companies, farm equipment companies, and energy companies to formulate and distribute appropriate information to the news media for telling that story.
4. We request that each parish Farm Bureau appoint a media "watchdog" to monitor public discussion of agriculture. Discussion may be – but is not limited to – advertising, television or radio, newspaper ads, or editorials. The role of monitor may be performed by an individual or committee. In the event that agriculture is inaccurately represented, we recommend that the monitor work with the Farm Bureau Public

- Relations staff to formulate a response or rebuttal. That response would then be distributed to the public through local "Letters to the Editor" news columns under the name of the parish Farm Bureau.
5. We request that Farm Bureau continue to maintain its website for the purpose of members advertising used equipment for sale.
 6. We support the Farm Bureau Seasonal Specialties Program.
 7. We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to make safety clinics for farm workers available to the parishes. These clinics should provide instructions on the proper use of both farm equipment and chemical utilization in order to improve the work environment for the farm worker and to assist in lowering insurance premiums through improved loss experience.
 8. We recommend that Farm Bureau look into the possibility of establishing a cellular telephone group structure for Farm Bureau members.
 9. We encourage all people involved in agri-business to join Farm Bureau.
 10. We request that the LFBF Board recommend to the AFBF Board that the date for announcing the winners of the Program Idea Exchange Contest be moved up in order to take advantage of airfare specials.
 11. We recommend the State Board consider financial assistance of a floating amount designated for travel, based on the size and scale of the program and the degree of participation by the parish, to any parish that has developed a program and has been selected to represent Louisiana and display their idea at the AFBF convention.
 12. We recommend continuing the workshop-idea exchange session at the Secretaries' Conference that is devoted to Federation secretarial tasks, such as convention, scrapbook, recordkeeping, etc.
 13. We support the existence and continued offering of the Farm Bureau website for "Grant and Loan Recovery Applications and Instructions," should they become available again, to assist farmers who might need this help.

Parish Presidents' Correspondence

517

We recommend that resolutions submitted by parish Farm Bureaus be acknowledged by letter and that the parish be notified of the action taken by the State Board.

Political Action Committee

518

1. We recommend that the AgriPac Board of Directors make an annual report to the Farm Bureau voting delegate body on the activities and progress of AgriPac.
2. We recommend that a copy of the AgriPac Bylaws and Operating Procedures be sent to each parish Farm Bureau.
3. We recommend that Farm Bureau members have the opportunity to make a voluntary contribution to AgriPac at the time of payment of annual dues.
4. We recommend that a newsletter or brochure explaining the benefits of AgriPac be enclosed with the membership billing.
5. We request that LFBF contact parish presidents before mailing AgriPac checks directly to legislators, in case the parish president would like to deliver the check personally.

Financial Statements and Audits

519

We recommend that all audited financial statements of the Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation and Affiliated Companies be available at the State Office to any parish president within ten days of receipt of a written request for such information by a parish president. Copies of confidential financial information shall not be removed from the State Office.

Parish Financial Advisory Team

520

We recommend that the Farm Bureau Board of Directors continue to make available to the parishes the services of the Parish Financial Advisory Team (PFAT). The purpose of the PFAT will be to review the financial conditions and activities of the parish and to make recommendations on procedures to be implemented to improve the financial condition of the parish.

Farm Bureau Voting Delegate List

521

We recommend that a list of voting delegates to the state convention be given to candidates for statewide Farm Bureau offices upon the request of the candidate. We further recommend that use of the list be restricted for the candidate's personal contact, letter, phone call, or other communication to the voting delegates, soliciting their support for the candidate requesting the list.

Any other use of such list, including dissemination to other individuals or groups of individuals, however constituted, should be considered a breach of trust with respect to the Farm Bureau organization and immediately reported to the delegates whose names appear on the list and to the Board of Directors for whatever action may be appropriate.

COMMODITY DIVISION CONFERENCES

RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMODITY DIVISIONS ARE SUBMITTED TO THE LOUISIANA FARM BUREAU BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR APPROVAL AND ACTION. THEY DO NOT REPRESENT POLICY DECISIONS OF THE VOTING DELEGATES.

Beekeepers Recommendations

600

1. Bees are valuable not only for the production of honey, pollen and wax, but as pollinators of many agricultural crops. We recommend continuation of an education program to inform the general public. We also recommend feature stories be done on the benefit of bees.
2. We recommend that APHIS conduct and maintain a vigorous inspection program at all international ports in Louisiana to prevent the introduction and spread of all honeybee pests and diseases.
3. We recommend continued research on the Africanized honeybee in conjunction with foreign governments. We also recommend Farm Bureau encourage cooperation with the LDAF, the Extension Service, and the Louisiana Beekeeper's Association to continue a public information and safety program concerning the Africanized Honeybee.
4. Additional funding is required to implement the educational portions of the Africanized honeybee action plan. The general public has to be informed and kept up-to-date. We, therefore, recommend that the state legislature provide funding to the Extension Service to implement the educational programs necessary to keep the public informed, reduce unnecessary alarm and to prevent the random killing of feral colonies.
5. We encourage the expansion and maintenance of wildflower programs along highways and embankments and limit the use of mowing and herbicides until after seed production.
6. We recommend that prior notice and special consideration should be pursued and given to beekeepers by commercial or aerial applicators, when large-scale spraying for agricultural pests occurs.
7. We recommend that research be continued and increased on the eradication of the wax moth and hive diseases, including the small hive beetle. We also recommend that the USDA continue to conduct research on the Tracheal Mite, Varroa Mite, and Small Hive Beetle for solutions which are practical, economical and production oriented. We recommend and urge the LDAF Bee Inspectors to keep a close watch on the small hive beetle and provide information and eradication measures to Louisiana beekeepers as they become available. We further recommend that \$250,000 dollars of funding be given to the USDA bee lab in Baton Rouge for work on the small hive beetle.
8. We recommend that Farm Bureau work with the LDAF to help promote Louisiana bee hive products.
9. We recommend that the USDA continues to place tariffs and quotas on imported honey, so as to make it more competitive with honey produced in the U. S.
10. We recommend that the appropriate federal or state agencies strictly enforce existing laws regarding "country of origin" labeling.
11. We recommend that the "Food for Peace Program" incorporate U. S. honey along with the other commodities.
12. We recommend DHH develop a unique set of guidelines for honey houses, rather than complying as food processing plants.
13. We recommend that Farm Bureau support incorporation of the state beekeepers association model beekeeping ordinance in local governments and municipalities.
14. We strongly support continued funding of the USDA research lab in Baton Rouge.
15. We strongly support funding for colony collapse disorder (CCD).
16. We recommend the U.S. honey standards and identification of ingredients be improved.
17. We recommend that state or federal agencies pay for the damages and losses to the owners of bee hives and pay for the cost of electric fences to protect the bee hives from black bears.

Catfish Recommendations

601

1. We support the development of a permitting program that would allow Louisiana fish farmers to produce grass carp for sale in Louisiana.
2. We encourage catfish producers to join the Louisiana Catfish Farmers' Association.
3. We recommend that Ag Center continue to provide educational programs on catfish production to financial institutions to assist in the growth and development of this industry in Louisiana.
4. We recommend that processors be required to weigh producers' fish as they are unloaded at the processing plant; drain water from baskets before weighing fish and make no additional deductions for water in the weighing baskets; weigh separately and print the weight of trash fish, turtles, dead fish, etc.; furnish copies to producers of all weight tickets, including settlement sheets.
5. We recommend that Farm Bureau continue its support of the catfish industry through such areas as commodity promotions, the AITC Program, and other avenues available to the organization, including the aquaculture curriculums in vocational agriculture and the Louisiana technical institutes.
6. We recommend that Farm Bureau encourage catfish producers to participate in the Catfish Quality Assurance Program.
7. We recommend that Farm Bureau work to get a gasoline tax refund for catfish producers.
8. We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to support research to eliminate off-flavor in catfish ponds.
9. We recommend that Farm Bureau support the Ag Center's research on aquacultural effluents.

Shrimp Fishermen Recommendations

602

1. We support the strict enforcement of labeling of origin of all seafood products.
2. We oppose any further taxation and/or user fees on commercial fishing or recreational vessels unless funds derived go to fisheries programs.
3. We recommend a disaster assistance program for the shrimp industry.
4. We support a comprehensive testing and inspection program on imported shrimp for antibiotics and other potential contaminants.
5. We recommend that Farm Bureau work to secure funding for a value added processing facility for packaging and distributing Louisiana Gulf Coast shrimp.

Cotton Recommendations

603

1. We recommend that cotton programs should embody and be administered to accomplish the following provisions:
 - (a) National cotton program legislation should include the following:
 - (i) The loan rate should be based on a flexible domestic price formula.
 - (ii) A user inducement provision should be included to promote both domestic and foreign consumption of cotton.
 - (iii) No authority for offsetting compliance.
 - (b) Subsidies to the cotton industry should be identified as such, rather than be identified as payments to the producer.
 - (c) Provide all cotton producers equal treatment regardless of size.
 - (d) We support producers being allowed to sign a register on the deadline for loan certification if they are unable to complete the certification by that date.
 - (e) We urge the Secretary of Agriculture to implement a nonrecourse loan for cottonseed. We also recommend that if a marketing loan is implemented for soybeans, a similar program be implemented for cottonseed to maintain their competitive relationship.
 - (f) We support STAX for cotton as an alternative Farm Program if the current Farm Program of Direct Payments and Countercyclicals are discontinued in the next Farm Bill.
2. It is becoming more apparent that we are in an export-or-perish cotton situation. In this regard, we favor PL 480, freight equalization and other programs to stimulate exports. Since our farmers are so dependent on exports for income, and sound economic policy is dependent on exports for a favorable balance of trade, we strongly oppose embargoes, licensing and other detriments to our export trade. We also recommend that foreign and domestic customers of cotton be treated equally.
3. We support an independent standardized cotton classing system which is operated to minimize the cost to the farmer.
4. We recommend that Farm Bureau support and initiate actions toward obtaining a crop insurance program that is both fair and equitable to all individual producers and commodities and economically protects farmers from disasters. We support the development of risk assurance products and urge their availability for all cotton producing regions. We support a pilot cost-of-production crop insurance program for cotton.
5. We commend the state FSA Committee and staff for their cooperation with the Farm Bureau Cotton Advisory Committee.
6. We recommend that the Experiment Station continue to accelerate its cotton research program with particular emphasis on integrated pest management.
7. We urge the Louisiana Seed Commission and Louisiana Seed Testing Laboratory to implement a cool germination test for cottonseed and establish a standard by which the results can be judged.
8. We request all newspapers in the cotton-producing areas to carry weekly cottonseed (oil, mill and gin) price quotations for their own area, other areas in the state and from neighboring states.
9. We should be alerted to possible discrepancies in the cotton-grading system and should assist producers in having any discrepancies corrected as soon as the affected producers notify the committee. We recommend that farmers be represented on any committee which establishes cotton grades for standards.
10. We recommend that the Cotton Classing Subcommittee remain active and review the operations of the Classing Office annually.
11. We commend county agents who engage in soil temperature announcements through radio and newspapers during spring planting.
12. We recommend that producer delegates to the National Cotton Council, members of the Cotton Board, and the members of the Board of Directors of Cotton, Inc., be appointed ex-officio members of the Farm Bureau Cotton Advisory Committee.
13. We recommend cooperation with the Louisiana Cotton and Grain Producers Association in accordance with the policies set forth in an effort to help in solving the problems in the cotton industry.
14. We recommend that AFBF commodity advisory committees hold at least two meetings annually--one of these to be held in advance of the AFBF annual meeting--in order for the committee to have access to the resolutions from the states pertaining to that commodity. The advisory committee should have an opportunity to analyze these resolutions and make recommendations to the AFBF Resolutions Committee.
15. We recommend that Farm Bureau cooperate with the AgCenter and the LDAF to oppose unacceptable EPA regulatory requirements.
16. We recommend that Farm Bureau commend Cotton Incorporated for their efforts in the area of research and promotion and support additional funding for it as the need is established.

17. We recommend that the Farm Bureau Public Relations cooperate with Cotton Incorporated in communicating its efforts and accomplishments to farmers.
18. We request that state agencies, such as hospitals where sanitation is important, be required to use 100 percent cotton products.
19. We support the boll weevil eradication effort and USDA-APHIS funding for boll weevil eradication.
20. We recommend that Farm Bureau aid in the promotion of available sales of cottonseed to dairy producers.
21. We recommend that Farm Bureau endorse the concept of the Committee on the Advancement of Cotton and encourage producers to participate.
22. We urge the United Cotton Merchants to change its penalty scale to conform to the USDA standards on light weight bales.
23. We recommend support of the Louisiana Cotton Museum in Lake Providence, Louisiana.
24. We recommend that all agencies and institutions utilize and illustrate current cotton costs figures which represent total costs producers incur instead of many current projections which omit certain fixed costs (i.e., land rent, etc.).
25. We recommend that representatives from all segments of the cotton industry, including suppliers to the industry, develop a plan to reduce costs and improve efficiency within all segments affecting the industry. We support development of a comprehensive plan as the best means of securing the future of U.S. cotton production and the domestic textile industry.
26. We support a schedule that dedicates more time for commodity conferences and the discussion of agricultural issues at the Farm Bureau Annual Meeting. We recommend that the Farm Bureau annual meeting program facilitate producer participation.
27. We support reform of the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA).
28. We support 100,000-pound harvest season weight permits for cotton and cottonseed.
29. We support abolishment of the automatic price discounts assessed against Ultra Narrow Row (UNR) stripper harvested cotton.
30. We recommend that all payments be made on 100% of base acres.
31. We support competition among suppliers of agricultural inputs and encourage an investigation into the monopolistic marketing practices of Monsanto, whose company policy only honors the maximum price per acre for Round-Up Ready cottonseed, if Round-Up trademarked glyphosate is used. We urge that Farm Bureau oppose chemical and seed company marketing agreements for cottonseed that specify use of a specific trade-labeled product when an alternative product with an identical chemical formulation and the same EPA label is available. We further recommend that anti-trust violations be pursued, if warranted.
32. We support cottonseed assistance payments if funds can be secured without impact to current farm program funding.
33. We oppose unlimited loan cotton re-concentration and only support loan cotton re-concentration provisions that provide reasonable safeguards to protect the viability of local cotton warehouses.
34. We oppose singling out cotton for more severe modifications in Farm Bill negotiations due to the Brazil vs. U.S. Cotton WTO verdict.

Crawfish Recommendations

604

1. We recommend continued research in market development for live Louisiana crawfish sales and peeled meat sales.
2. We encourage crawfish farmers in Louisiana to join the Louisiana Crawfish Farmers Association to work in strengthening the crawfish industry in Louisiana.
3. We request that state universities continue their marketing research activities in order to develop a national marketing program for Louisiana crawfish.
4. We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to support the HACCP Seafood Inspection Program at the producer level.
5. We support a voluntary crawfish industry quality assurance program.
6. Because of the labor problems in the crawfish processing industry, we strongly recommend continued research for the development of economically feasible mechanical peeling equipment.
7. We recommend that research efforts be undertaken to develop a more economically feasible means of harvesting crawfish.
8. We support the continuation of tariffs on imported crawfish and recommend that these monies be directed back to the Crawfish Research and Promotion Board and crawfish producers.
9. We request that Farm Bureau works to get a gasoline tax refund for crawfish producers.
10. We oppose amending the Clean Water Act by removing the words navigable waters which would give the Corps of Engineers and EPA jurisdiction over all water bodies in the United States.
11. We support the reform of the H-2A workers program to be more farmer-friendly so as to ensure that H-2A applications are processed at the state level in a timely and impartial manner.

Dairy Recommendations

605

1. We recommend that Farm Bureau support a national dairy program that maintains the Federal Milk Marketing Order system and the dairy price support program. We are opposed to any federally mandated production quotas that would result in a displacement of Class I sales to Louisiana producers. We support a national checkoff program for the promotion of milk with a portion of these funds being returned to the states for local promotion.
2. (a) We recommend that tuberculosis testing be done by federal and state veterinarians with no change

- to the dairymen.
- (b) We support the practice of calfhooed vaccination.
 - 3. We oppose any legislation which would invalidate Louisiana milk sanitation regulations and substitute in its place a federal government code, thus forcing lower quality milk surpluses from other states into Louisiana.
 - 4. (a) We support continued research to develop effective insecticides which can be used on supplemental pastures in Louisiana.
 - (b) We request that studies be continued at all livestock experiment stations on grasses, clovers and fertilizers adaptable to the different production areas in Louisiana.
 - (c) We support continued research on mastitis.
 - 6. (a) We recommend that the State Board of Health continue to maintain the present health standards that are required by Louisiana producers, for milk produced in other states and sold in Louisiana.
 - (b) We request the continuation of the Ag Center's support and funding of the DHIA program.
 - 7. We support the advertising of milk and milk products and request that a financial report on the Louisiana Dairy Products Promotion Board be given at the dairy session of the Farm Bureau annual convention.
 - 8. We recommend maintaining the butterfat content of packaged whole milk in Louisiana at 3.25 percent.
 - 9. We support the maintenance of the sections of the Dairy Stabilization Law pertaining to the producer-pricing formula and the state marketing order.
 - 10. We oppose the labeling of imitation dairy products, which allows the use of the name of the product being imitated in the name of the substitute.
 - 11. We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to support the GEN-X Semen Quality Evaluation and pregnancy testing associated programs.
 - 12. We recommend that Farm Bureau support protein pricing of milk.
 - 13. We recommend that Farm Bureau work to have NRCS expand cost-share assistance for environmental control systems so that all required equipment and installation costs are included.
 - 14. We recommend that the Ag Center and the LDAF maintain a Louisiana farm-retail fluid milk price series.
 - 15. We recommend that livestock disease indemnity programs not be phased out, but that funding for these programs be targeted to address specific animal diseases, such as Johne's disease.

Equine Recommendations

606

- 1. We recommend that Farm Bureau work with the horse industry to develop a Louisiana equine industry education, research, marketing, and promotional program.
- 2. We recommend that Farm Bureau oppose the Horse Slaughter Prevention Act.
- 3. We recommend that Farm Bureau request the LSU AgCenter to devote additional resources and faculty for technology transfer to address the various important issues associated with the Louisiana Equine industry. It would be especially beneficial to have regional equine specialists to complement the excellent work being conducted by the State Extension Equine Specialist. The Louisiana equine audience represents a large and diverse group that would benefit tremendously from additional educational efforts in this area by LSU AgCenter Faculty.
- 4. We recommend that Farm Bureau request that the Louisiana Department of Ag and Forestry develop and keep statistical data about the numbers and the value of the horse industry, and work to promote and market horses as an agricultural industry in Louisiana.
- 5. We recommend that the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry increase surveillance of the Coggins Testing Program and strictly enforce the Program's provisions.
- 6. We recommend that the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry maintain a database on equine owners in the state so as to facilitate locating these individuals in case animals are stolen, lost or displaced due to natural disasters.
- 7. We recommend that equine be recognized as livestock and that equine feed be exempt from state sales tax.

Forestry Recommendations

607

- 1. We strongly support and encourage continued investigation and enforcement of forest arson, timber theft, and dumping and trespass laws in Louisiana. We also support the continued improvement upon these laws.
- 2. We support the use of Louisiana wood and wood products in all buildings and structures whenever such materials have equal or better structural qualities than other materials, will meet specifications required, and are competitive in price, and reflect sustainability standards that support the use of wood as a renewable resource.
- 3. We recommend that Farm Bureau, the LFA, the LDAF, and the USDA continue to work together, and that Farm Bureau cooperate with future forest programs, the forest incentive programs, roadside enhancement, soil erosion and the stewardship program. We support the expansion and creation of federal and state incentive programs for forestry.
- 4. We recommend that Farm Bureau carry a forestry management or forestry topic article in each issue of the "Farm Bureau News".
- 5. We support research and development of wood as fuel and as a source of renewable energy.
- 6. We recommend that income averaging be made available for forestry income. We urge that Farm Bureau continue to support the tax credit for reforestation and a permanent repeal of the federal estate tax.
- 7. We request that forested public areas be subjected to recommended silvicultural management practices for the control of pest infestation problems and wildfire prevention, so as not to perpetrate these problems on adjoining private timberlands. We also request Farm Bureau support legislation requiring silvicultural management practices be implemented on designated wilderness, natural and other restricted-use areas.

8. We recommend that Farm Bureau support an increase in funding for state and federally funded programs for the control of beaver, feral hogs, nutria, and invasive plant species such as Chinese Tallow, Giant Salvia and Cogongrass in timberlands.
9. We recommend that the Farm Bureau Safety Department assist in safety programs for the timber industry.
10. We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to support the Louisiana Forest Products Development Center.
11. We encourage landowners and the logging industry to follow the voluntary Best Management Practices.
12. We encourage Farm Bureau to request continuation of maintaining the Southern Forest Experiment Station.
13. We encourage the LFA, the Extension Service, NRCS, LDAF and Farm Bureau to cooperate with each other in educating and informing the industry and general public about the forestry industry and its importance. We also encourage parish Farm Bureaus to form forestry committees from these respective groups. We further encourage local forestry committee work with parish governments.
14. We recommend that Farm Bureau join with the LFA, the LDAF, the LSU AgCenter, and the Louisiana Society of American Foresters in helping promote the PLT and Forestry Awareness Week.
15. We recommend that the forest survey continue to be conducted on an annualized basis with adequate state and federal funding.
16. We recommend Farm Bureau closely monitor and evaluate the economic impacts of the new air quality standards proposed by EPA on forestry, marshland and agricultural burning activities.
17. We recommend that the Corps of Engineers honor the Section 404 silvicultural exemption of the Clean Water Act as a way to monitor sustainable forestry activities. We believe the Corps use of Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act is an inappropriate application of the law.
18. We recommend that Farm Bureau support acceleration of the phase out of sales tax on forestry equipment and notify dealers and Farm Bureau members of any changes.
19. We recommend that Farm Bureau ask the appropriate agencies, DOTD and others, to reclaim and maintain right-of-ways on secondary roads.
20. We recommend that Farm Bureau pursue regaining a seat on the AFBF Forestry Committee.
21. We support the participation in any Sustainable Forestry certification program for timber owners such as the American Tree Farm System and the Forest Stewardship Program.
22. We recommend that Farm Bureau support the right to practice forestry through the Louisiana Right to Farm and Forest law. Farm Bureau should continue to monitor activities in parishes across Louisiana that could affect the rights of forest landowners to practice sustainable forestry and the cypress mulch industry.
23. We recommend that Farm Bureau pursue increased funding for the Louisiana Forest Productivity Program.
24. We recommend that Farm Bureau support economic development tax incentives for existing forestry related industries in Louisiana.
25. We recommend that current and new federal and state incentive programs for forestry be obtained and fully funded.

Livestock Recommendations

608 (a)

1. We oppose government controls in the livestock industry and oppose any attempt to regulate production or fixed prices by the government and/or have government subsidies for the livestock industry.
2. We support the practice of calfhooed vaccination.
3. We recommend that when law enforcement authorities pick up loose stock, they contact the Livestock Brand Commission to properly identify the animals and notify the owner before sale.
4. We support a viable state analytical and diagnostic program for Louisiana livestock producers.
5. We urge that those accused of livestock rustling be promptly brought to trial and those proven guilty be required to serve their full sentences, not be given suspended sentences.
6. We support a cooperative marketing facility for livestock.
7. We support state plant inspection being equal to federal plant inspection to allow meat from a state-inspected plant to move interstate.
8. We support legislation which would require all retail outlets for beef and beef products to print on the package that the product is made from imported beef. Restaurants that use imported meat and meat products should display a notice on each menu or at each ordering point to that effect.
9. We recommend that imported meat products, either whole or blended, not be eligible for purchase with food stamps.
10. (a) We oppose legislation that would give animal rights organizations or any public agency the right to establish standards for the raising, handling, feeding, housing or transportation of livestock.
(b) We also oppose any legislation that would pay bounties to complainants.
11. We support the use of and wholesale and retail sale of FDA-approved drugs by veterinarians in a controlled manner.
12. We recommend that Farm Bureau work in cooperation with the Louisiana Cattlemen's Association in all areas of mutual concern.
13. We support a program that stops the incoming traffic of nonvaccinated (brucellosis) adult cattle into our state. Calves coming from out-of-state, going through the local markets and back to the farms should be calfhooed vaccinated prior to leaving the auction barns.
14. We recommend that veterinarians be encouraged to write prescriptions for frequently prescribed drugs to enable farmers to pursue least-cost alternatives.
15. We recommend that informants who provide information to appropriate authorities concerning the theft of livestock and/or farm equipment be rewarded by the Livestock Brand Commission prior to a conviction.

16. We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to support the Louisiana Brucellosis Program for vaccinating and testing cattle. We further recommend the continuation of vaccinating heifers retained on the farm or kept as replacement heifers.

Alternative Domestic Livestock Industries

608 (b)

As “nontraditional” livestock production (alternative species including, but not limited to ratites, goats, rabbits, etc.) emerge in the state, we recommend that Farm Bureau assist these producers in the development and promotion of these industries.

Market Produce Recommendations

609

1. We recommend continuing our efforts to improve market conditions and market facilities for Louisiana produce. We further recommend continuing to cooperate with state and federal agencies and other groups to assist local communities to develop the organizations needed to establish farmers’ markets.
2. We recommend that the AgCenter focus market produce research for specific grower needs.
3. We vigorously oppose the practice of permitting public institutions, except those doing agricultural research, to sell on the open market in competition with agriculture. We request that Farm Bureau pursue legislation to stop prison farms from selling produce in direct competition against Louisiana produce farmers. We do not oppose distribution of agricultural products to other public institutions, but we believe it is unfair to make farmers compete against products financed by their own tax dollars. When these products are sold, they should be priced not less than the going market price.
4. We support enforcement of the Perishable Agricultural Commodity Act (PACA) to insure prompt payment to producers for perishable products. We also request that LDAF officials work with handlers to get adequate dissemination of price information to producers.
5. We urge all of the effort possible be exerted to relieve the critical labor shortage that occurs in the cultivating and harvesting of crops that require hand labor. We recommend that Farm Bureau support a reformed H-2A foreign agricultural worker program that offers a prevailing wage rate and no expansion of workers private right of action against farm employers.
6. We recommend that the horticulture specialist with the Extension Service continue to serve in an advisory capacity to stimulate interest in the Market Produce Committee.
7. We support necessary funds to continue research work on horticultural crop diseases.
8. We recommend that LFBF conduct an in-depth study of sales tax exemptions that exist for agricultural commodities and value-added products sold by farmers especially as related to revised statute 47:305.
9. We recommend that the Louisiana Commissioner of Agriculture, in conjunction with the AgCenter and Farm Bureau, make an effort to inform the general public of the costs-of-production studies of the major crops, particularly truck crops.
10. We recommend the use of fresh strawberries and other fresh Louisiana produce in the Louisiana school lunch program.
11. We urge the LDAF to encourage the use and sale of Louisiana products within the state. We also recommend that the LDAF encourage Louisiana brokers to sell Louisiana produce within the state.
12. We recommend that Farm Bureau assist individuals and groups who express an interest in the development and organization of a produce marketing facility or service in a given area of the state.
13. We recommend that Farm Bureau assist in the development of a citrus industry market for Louisiana.
14. We recommend that Farm Bureau periodically make available to producers published information on the proper and safe use of agricultural chemicals.
15. We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to work for additional reform to the worker's compensation laws.
16. We recommend that Farm Bureau look into the feasibility of marketing Louisiana products through other state Farm Bureaus.
17. We commend the New Orleans French Market Corporation for the changes made to improve parking for farmers and continue to work with the French Market to implement other changes and improvements that would benefit farmers who trade produce at the market.
18. We request that the LDAF investigate violations in the use of the "Louisiana Grown" label which has been found illegally labeling out-of-state produce.
19. We recommend that the State of Louisiana and parish facilities serve Louisiana-produced commodities when available.
20. We recommend that the LDAF publish weekly retail farmers’ market prices for commodities sold at Louisiana Farmers’ Markets.
21. We recommend that the LDAF implement the recommendations of the National Commission on Small Farms Report jointly with the USDA.
22. We commend the LDAF for implementing the Farmers Market Certificate Program for Senior Citizens and recommend continuation of the program. We support lengthening the period for redeeming certificates by pushing back the deadline for redeeming certificates later than December or as late as possible.
23. We encourage the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry to make Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program coupons available to Louisiana senior citizens during the 10 month period from March through December. Providing coupons to Louisiana’s senior citizens during this time period will allow our senior citizens to purchase produce when Louisiana has its largest supply of locally-grown fresh fruits and vegetables.
24. We support greater availability of Federal Specialty Crop Block Grants for Louisiana market produce crops.

25. We support that incentives be made available to school lunch programs to permit and encourage more purchases of Louisiana-grown produce and products.
26. We recommend that Farm Bureau work to address market produce losses when crafting legislation for agricultural crop disaster assistance.
27. We recommend that the LDAF take all steps necessary to stop the spread of citrus greening in support of the Louisiana citrus industry.
28. Improved crop insurance policies for underserved commodities developed as part of the next Farm Bill should include improved crop insurance policies for Louisiana market produce crops.

Nurserymen Recommendations

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1. We request that Farm Bureau urge the AFBF to recommend to the USDA that there would be no attempt to lessen the Quarantine 37 standards for imported plants and materials used for media. These standards cannot be lessened due to the risk of importation of foreign organisms.
2. We recommend that Louisiana Farm Bureau and the American Farm Bureau Federation keep a watchful eye out for legislation that excludes the nursery industry from agricultural industry classification. We also recommend that AFBF support the American Nursery and Landscape Association of Nurserymen in dealing with EPA in their efforts to exclude the nursery industry as an agricultural enterprise.
3. We recommend that Farm Bureau submit a policy recommendation to AFBF to strongly support increased USDA funding for APHIS inspections and greater APHIS regulation of plant materials entering the U.S.
4. We recommend more stringent inspection and quarantine procedures by USDA, USDA-APHIS and PPQ to stop the spread of Sudden Oak Death.
5. We recommend that career program(s) of horticulture maintenance, landscape construction and nursery management be maintained, expanded and further developed as appropriate at Louisiana universities, community colleges and vocational schools/colleges. We also recommend that an apprenticeship program be established for at least one semester in a nursery field to help students attain practical experience. We also recommend that a person receiving a degree in horticulture be required to take an appropriate number of semester hours in the field of business management.
6. We recommend endorsement of effort made by the nursery industry of Louisiana in providing a high-quality selection of living plant materials to be used in beautification projects and discourage the use of artificial plants in landscape development.
7. We recommend that the LDAF strictly enforce inspection procedures on certified horticultural products, including turf grasses, coming from out of state.
8. We strongly recommend that LFBF work to increase the number of Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry inspectors.
9. We recommend that state colleges, universities, and the AgCenter continue their efforts to disseminate information on ornamental plant evaluations regarding biological and chemical controls for nursery pests. We recommend that the LSU Department of Entomology secure a research entomologist to work directly with insect problems on nursery and landscape areas.
10. We request that Farm Bureau continue its support of the Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association in its Certified Nursery and Landscape Professional Program and all other Nursery-Industry educational efforts.
11. We request that nurseries be recognized and included in the distribution of EQIP funds.
12. We recommend that financial aid be obtained from state and/or federal funds for the purpose of controlling imported fire ants in nursery-related businesses.
13. We recommend that Farm Bureau join with the Louisiana Nursery and Landscape Association and the Louisiana Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects in the pursuit of green laws (landscape ordinances) for Louisiana communities. We further recommend this be accomplished by establishing incentive-based enabling legislation at the state and local levels.
14. We recommend that Farm Bureau strongly support the LDAF's enforcement of all state plant pest quarantines.
15. We recommend support of legislation that would make agricultural labor more available for all producers and reduce the regulatory compliance burden associated with maintaining an agricultural labor force. We recommend that Farm Bureau support H-2A reform legislation that provides a wage rate, no higher than the prevailing wage rate, and does not expand a worker's private right of action against farm employers. We recommend that LFBF join USA Farmers to support Agricultural guest worker visa program reform.
16. We recommend that the LSU AgCenter acknowledge and continue to develop a research and extension program to focus on commercial nursery, landscape and turf. We also encourage adequate LSU AgCenter horticulture personnel at the parish and regional level to handle commercial and consumer demand.
17. We are concerned with the implementation of the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) and its effect on the availability of agricultural chemicals. We recommend that a priority be maintained on FQPA monitoring and that Farm Bureau work with AFBF to oppose the loss of chemical labels until alternative products are available and accurate use data is used.
18. We support monitoring of CAFTA-DR nursery imports and support implementation of import safeguard protections if imported nursery stock negatively impacts domestic nursery markets.
19. We request that nurseries be eligible to receive emergency fuel distributed after natural disasters.
20. We request Farm Bureau oppose any attempts to tax wholesale nursery products.

Oyster Farmer Recommendations**611**

1. We recommend that oyster farming be recognized as an agricultural industry and all regulatory aspects of the industry mandated to the Louisiana Department of Ag and Forestry.
2. We recommend that Farm Bureau work with appropriate entities in the development of a predator and disease control program.
3. We recommend that Farm Bureau address public education and awareness of labeling oysters.
4. We recommend that oyster leases be evaluated in accordance with the Davis Pond method of valuation and include value-added improvements resulting from the oyster farmer's efforts.
5. We recommend the development of a system of standards that can be used for valuation of oyster leases.
6. We recommend that Farm Bureau support a marketing program for oyster farmers.

Pecan Recommendations**612**

1. We urge continued efforts by AgCenter and Wildlife & Fisheries to control predator depredations in pecan orchards.
2. We recommend that producers, with help from the Extension Service, continue developing a pecan promotion program and present it at state pecan shows and other similar events.
3. We recommend that Farm Bureau coordinate an effort to have Louisiana pecans represented in the AFBF annual meeting trade show.
4. We recommend that Farm Bureau continue contributing \$275 annually toward awards for the state pecan show.
5. We encourage the AgCenter Pecan Research Station to maintain their emphasis on research projects dedicated to controlling stinkbugs, other harmful insects and diseases in pecans.
6. We request the Farm Bureau support regionalization of the LSU Pecan Research Station.
7. We request that Farm Bureau work with FSA to modify existing harvest rules used to determine yields for NAP pecan coverage and coverage for other programs. We support development of crop insurance policies for pecans as part of the next Farm Bill.
8. We request that the LSU AgCenter Cooperative Extension Service re-staff the Pecan Specialist Position and key pecan research positions at the LSU Pecan Research Station.
9. We recommend that LFBF work with the LSU AgCenter to keep I-69 road construction and rights of ways from harming the LSU Pecan Research Station and maintain operation of the station until highway construction begins.
10. We oppose FDA Food Safety Modernization Act regulations that would prohibit grazing of livestock in pecan orchards within 9 months of harvest.
11. We support dollars generated from crop sales by LSU AgCenter Research Stations be earmarked and returned to the Station.

Poultry Recommendations**613**

1. Since producers have little voice in determining or negotiating for contract provisions, we urge continued development and support programs designed to help alleviate these problems for broiler and breeder producers.
2. We recommend that the Louisiana Poultry Federation develop programs that will assist and improve production management for broiler, breeder and table egg producers. We further recommend that the Association continue to develop a working relationship with poultry producers to facilitate the advancement of the industry in Louisiana.
3. We recommend continued support for a state-federal inspection/grading program for processed poultry.
4. We recommend continued efforts to obtain long-term contracts (minimum of 10 years) from integrators in coordination with lending institutions and recommend that lending institutions adopt policy requiring such long-term contracts for making financing available to broiler, breeders and table egg producers.
5. We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to work with FSA and NRCS to secure adequate funding and technical assistance so as to assist poultry producers in addressing nonpoint source water quality issues associated with their farming operations.
6. We request that any new equipment recommended by integrators for installation in poultry facilities be backed by proven research data.
7. We recommend that a poultry farm in good operating condition can be sold to anyone interested in purchasing the facility without mandated retro-fitting, as long as this facility meets industry standards.
8. We recommend that Farm Bureau work to secure a sales tax exemption on utility costs for poultry-producing operations.
9. We recommend that Farm Bureau work to secure sales tax exemptions on poultry production equipment and parts.
10. We recommend that EQIP provide funding assistance to growers for increasing holding capacity of litter sheds and compost barns in order to prevent run-off related water quality issues.
11. We recommend that Farm Bureau Insurance review guidelines for insuring poultry houses so as to improve availability and insurability of poultry houses.

Rice Recommendations**614**

1. (a) The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (FCEA) continues to move the U.S. toward a market-based, export-competitive agriculture. We support that general direction despite what we consider a disproportionate share of the deficit reduction burden allocated to farm

programs. We support maintaining the rice industry's proportionate historical share of the budget baseline in future farm bills. We oppose any additional cuts to payments, or loan rates, established by the FCEA. Future farm programs designs should take into account the historical income supports in determining base income average support levels. Currently, access to many rice markets around the world remain limited due to continued trade barriers and internal farm policies and subsidies of foreign countries. Therefore, it is necessary for rice farmers to receive payments to offset these limitations. Regarding the provisions of the FCEA:

- (i) We recommend that loan rates be uniform for all classes of rice and that they be set at a minimum of the current levels set in the 2008 Farm Bill.
 - (ii) We recommend all provisions enacted regarding payment limitation plans should be structured to facilitate the full participation in FCEA. Farm Program provisions should be implemented in such a manner as to minimize disruptions to traditional tenant-landlord relationships and provide for a fair and equitable division of payments.
 - (iii) We recommend payment eligibility requirements be the same for both landlords and tenants. We request that program payments for rice be paid sooner so farmers will be able to use this money to help pay expenses as they occur.
 - (b) We urge FSA to use the actual loan value determined by sample in determining loans on on-farm stored rice. We recommend that rice grading #6 or sample be eligible for the special rice loan. We also recommend that the marketing loan payment be made on actual grade, milling yield, and shipping weights.
 - (c) We recommend that in the event of CCC takeover of rice, the producer not be responsible for transportation charges for delivery.
 - (d) We recommend that quality and weight adjustments on an existing rice loan not be categorized as a new loan application if this occurs following the deadline for loan applications.
 - (e) We request that AFBF and FAPRI use total economic costs of production in evaluating farm program changes.
 - (f) We request that the Administration release to the USDA agencies the conservation funds for immediate implementation of EQIP and other programs.
 - (g) We recommend that the congressional delegation be informed that the safety net proposed in the current farm bill debate will make it difficult for rice producers to stay in business.
 - (h) We support the working wetlands conservation initiative.
2. (a) We recommend the maintenance of a viable PL 480 program, as well as the maintenance of any viable government assisted export programs, and further recommend that provisions which place limitations on sales based on national gross incomes and other such measures be excluded. We also recommend that no PL 480 sales be made to countries for specific commodities applicable to the PL 480 program. We further recommend that the limit on broken kernels in the PL 480 program be eliminated.
- (b) Due to the current economic crisis facing rice producers and the rice milling industry, Farm Bureau should support the following:
 - (1) All commercial U. S. dollar sales should include all forms of rice (rough, brown, milled white, and processed rice products).
 - (2) Only value added rice products should be authorized in all government sales or food aid donations such as PL 480 and 416 rice exports.
 - (c) We recommend that action be taken to prevent the importation of rice that does not meet the same health and regulatory standards as U. S. rice or that adversely affects domestic rice sales unfairly due to subsidies and other unfair trade practices.
3. With regard to transportation and movement of rice.
- (a) We recommend that the Rice Advisory Committee continue to monitor any problems at the Port of Lake Charles. We also recommend that the Committee continue to work with rice milling interests and carry out any recommendations to alleviate any of these problems. We also request Farm Bureau to work towards having a rice specific person on the Lake Charles Port Authority.
 - (b) We oppose any attempts of a national dock strike.
 - (c) We request that the U. S. terminate or lift all grain embargoes against Cuba.
 - (d) We support rail rate reductions for rail transport to Mexico.
 - (e) We support trade agreements that would open rice markets.
4. (a) We recognize the need for all interested organizations representing the interests of rice farmers to work together to solve many of the problems facing the rice industry. We wish to cooperate with other organizations in the industry to solve some of the rice industry problems.
- (b) We recommend continued support and funding of the USA Rice Federation be dependent upon the Federation addressing concerns regarding: formulation of a policy manual; issuance of policy position statements by staff; reconciliation of budget and deficit spending; evaluation of CEO and organizational performance; evaluation of organizational and membership structure, with emphasis on segment representation being based on contributions. We recommend Louisiana contribute the same percentage of funds collected from producers to the Federation as contributed by other states.
 - (c) We do not support a national checkoff for rice at this time.
5. We support the use of hundredweight as the uniform unit of measure throughout the rice industry. We recommend the Farm Bureau Marketing Association promote and practice the quoting of prices for sale of rice by hundredweight using the standards of 55/70 for long grain and 55/68 for medium grain.

6. We oppose subsidies in any manner to any foreign nations that have attained the goal of food production sufficient to feed their population and especially to countries whose commodities directly compete with our exports in world markets.
7. (a) We encourage consistently high standards of rice seed certification. We should keep abreast of and provide superior standards to those of adjoining and competing states. We urge that seed rice standards laws be more strongly enforced in the future. We recommend that Farm Bureau support legislation to the effect that rice can be certified in any size container and sold as such as long as it remains in that container until it is received by the purchaser or user. This does not apply to registered or foundation seed.
(b) We recommend that regulations be developed regarding the planting of rice of different varieties adjacent to or nearby seed rice fields during planting by aerial applicators.
(c) We support the industry seed rice plan.
8. (a) We commend the LSU AgCenter Rice Research Station in Crowley for the excellent work being conducted in all disciplines.
(b) We request that the date of the annual rice field day not be the day immediately following the Farm Bureau annual meeting.
(c) We urge vigilance on the serious problem which the common blackbird is causing in the production of rice and other grains, with accompanying action deemed feasible which would control this pest. We further request help in this matter from the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, the U. S. Department of the Interior and the USDA. We also request that Avitrol or a similar product be approved for use and that the Rice Research Board fund a project for blackbird control both at planting and harvesting time. We recommend that the DWF allow a hunting season for the Mexican Squealer or that some other means of control be developed by the Rice Experiment Station. We also recommend that AgCenter conduct research into effective beaver control.
(d) We support a statewide beaver and feral hog control program.
9. Oil exploration work is causing serious damage to rice water wells, as well as to farm and home wells. Negotiations for the settlement of claims, as well as court action in some cases, have proven unsatisfactory. Inadequately plugging seismic holes causes concern with regard to ground water contamination.
10. We recommend steps be taken to encourage the increased consumption of rice in the armed forces, school lunch programs and institutions.
11. We strongly recommend that the Louisiana Congressional Delegation require EPA to adopt realistic and appropriate standards, guidelines and procedures based upon scientific data to evaluate pest control material to be used on rice and other agricultural commodities. We also recommend that EPA change their internal policy regarding pest control materials on rice.
(a) We recommend that EPA expedite the registration of pesticides.
12. We urge work toward the objective of speeding up market news so that the rice farmers can have effective utilization of this information. We urge a cooperative effort with USDA, AFBF, Farm Bureau, and the AgCenter in establishing a market news service for rice farmers.
13. We support and endorse:
(a) The Rice Council on a state and industry-wide basis to promote the consumption of rice as America's most economical as well as best food and urge that rice be served at all Farm Bureau functions.
(b) The Rice Research and Promotion checkoff programs. We also ask that these programs be publicized.
(c) The uniform mandatory assessments of the rice research and promotion checkoff programs.
(d) The National Rice Month of September.
(e) The Food-Watch Program.
(f) The rice industry's wildlife habitat projects for waterfowl.
(g) The Louisiana Rice Political Action Committee.
14. We recommend stricter enforcement of the Uniform Rice Sales Policy to reduce the lag time between sales and payment for rough rice to the producer.
15. We recommend that the Rice Council seek to have adequate supplies of brown rice, rice bran, rice flour, rice oil and rice vinegar available through conventional store outlets, rather than exclusively being sold through health stores. We also recommend to the Rice Council that they encourage manufacturers of rice cookers to include complementary sample bags of rice with the cookers. We urge that the Rice Council request from USDA in-kind stocks and any available funds for domestic promotion of rice.
16. We oppose the use of or further expansion of cargo preference in the export of rice for any type of sales agreement.
17. We encourage parish Farm Bureaus to have rice advisory meetings periodically to update Farm Bureau rice members on the status of problems and to relay concerns to the Rice Advisory State Committee.
18. We recommend that the Louisiana Rice Promotion Board and the Louisiana Crawfish Promotion and Research Board jointly fund the promotion of both products at the annual AFBF convention.
19. We recommend that the rice, livestock and crawfish conferences held at the annual Farm Bureau convention, be scheduled at separate times.
20. We oppose any effort by local governments to restrict the use of licensed material on private property. We also oppose any effort by state or local government to restrict in the name of environmental protection the rights of landowners without due compensation.

21. We encourage Farm Bureau and AFBF to aggressively monitor changes to the 1994 MOA on Wetlands in order that we can maintain our use of normal farming practices and to continue to aggressively address other water quality regulatory issues.
22. We recommend that Farm Bureau establish a water use study committee from the Rice Advisory Committee and affected parish presidents and that the committee work with the AgCenter and USGS and create water use (surface and ground water) standards. We support efforts to insure water availability for rice production.
23. We are supportive of new GMO technology for rice and encourage millers and merchants to aggressively address delivery system issues and seek markets for GMO rice.
24. We encourage Farm Bureau to monitor critical habitat designations for any species, including the Piping Plover.
25. We oppose removal of the term navigable from the Clean Water Restoration Act (CWRA).
26. We support the Columbia FTA agreement and the TRQ revenues being allocated to the respective state rice research boards.
27. We support renewable energy and wind farms as long as it does not interfere with normal farming practices or diminish adjoining land uses and/or values.

Soybean, Wheat and Feed Grains Recommendations

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1. National Programs
 - (a) We recommend that farm program announcements be made on a timely basis and effectively communicated to individual producers by FSA.
 - (b) In the area of national soybean farm program legislation, we recommend that when the opportunity presents itself, Farm Bureau actively pursue an increase in the marketing loan rate to \$6.50 per bushel.
 - (c) We recommend that in determining insurable yields for crop insurance, that actual yields be used in calculating that yield.
 - (d) We recommend that Farm Bureau pursue crop insurance coverage for broadcast soybeans.
 - (e) We recommend that future farm program payments (MLAs, AMTA, Fixed Decoupled or Counter-Cyclical) be paid on 100 percent of a farm's crop acreage base instead of the current 83.5 percent which will be 85% in 2012.
 - (f) We recommend that the Administration release to the USDA agencies the Conservation funds for the immediate implementation of conservation programs.
2. Research and Promotion
 - (a) We support the one-half cent checkoff for wheat, corn and grain sorghum, along with the ½ of 1% of the net selling price checkoff collected on soybeans by the Louisiana Soybean and Grain Research and Promotion Board. We support suspending the state grain sorghum checkoff while the national sorghum checkoff is in effect.
 - (b) We believe that because of the importance of the soybean industry in Louisiana, that adequate research be conducted in the areas of weed, insect and disease control, fertilization rates, variety testing and plant breeding for soybeans. We also recommend that research be conducted on the deposit of agricultural chemicals on target areas of all crops, and that research be expanded on wheat and feed grains production in Louisiana.
 - (c) We recommend a registration be maintained for a fungicide, for control of aerial blight in soybeans.
 - (d) We request that appropriate synthetic pyrethroids be labeled for use on grain sorghum. We also request that the Ag Center research alternative pest control programs for grain sorghum, specifically midge control.
 - (e) We support fungicide testing for milo and corn.
 - (f) We support research conducted by the Ag Center regarding chemical carryover between soybean herbicides and wheat and feed grain herbicides.
 - (g) We support continued research on the application, timing and method of fertilization on wheat, milo and corn.
 - (h) We recommend that research be performed regarding stink bug damage and other insect damage in corn as related to aflatoxin.
 - (i) We recommend that tax dollars supporting agricultural research to be used in foreign countries should only be used to develop or expand usage of U. S. agricultural products. U.S. tax dollars should not be used to make foreign countries self-sufficient or competitive against the U. S. in world markets.
 - (j) We support additional research dedicated to soybeans for bio-fuels production.
3. Grain Standards
 - (a) We are opposed to a system of premiums and discounts on soybeans, when graded by the current visual FGIS grading system. We recommend that soybeans be priced on end-use value.
 - (b) In the area of weighing and grading of soybeans, we support the efforts to insure that the weighing, grading and moisture testing of soybeans are done accurately and impartially, and that these practices keep pace with the latest technological improvements.
 - (c) We urge more constant standards for the grading of wheat and feed grains for moisture, foreign material, etc. We recommend that aflatoxin levels in Louisiana corn and/or feedstuffs follow federal standards. Since soft red winter wheat quality parameters, measured at the USDA-ARS Soft Wheat Quality Laboratory, indicate no relationship between test weight and flour yield from sound grain, we recommend Farm Bureau support the National Wheat Improvement Committee in changing the test weight of wheat from 60 pounds to 57 pounds per bushel.

(d) We ask that the LDAF request elevators to make available grain samples to producers whose grain is rejected or fails to pass aflatoxin tests.

4. General

(a) We support the production and use of agricultural based fuels such as ethanol and soy diesel. We support the renewable fuels legislation passed in 2006 and recommend that Farm Bureau actively pursue additional state legislation to enhance the renewable fuels industry in Louisiana. We recommend that Farm Bureau actively pursue state legislation for renewable fuels. We also support the retention and development of policies which support the biomass fuels industry.

(b) We commend the efforts of the Farm Bureau Marketing Association and encourage expansion of services to members as feasible. We recommend that the Farm Bureau Marketing Association Board divide the Marketing Association into separate accounting entities between the rice division and the soybean and grain division.

(c) We recommend that Farm Bureau study the possibility of using soy oil ink to print all Farm Bureau publications where feasible. Also, Farm Bureau should encourage the State of Louisiana to use soy oil ink where feasible.

(d) In the area of soybean certification, we support vigor testing on soybean seed in Louisiana and the establishment of minimum standards and labeling requirements, as soon as it becomes feasible. Cool germination on soybean seed should be standard.

(e) We support GEO technology for assistance in production agriculture.

(f) We support the 100,000 lb. harvest season permit.

(g) In the future, we recommend all Farm Bureau nominees to the Greater Baton Rouge Port Commission be full time farmers. Of the two positions we recommend that at least one position be held by a farmer that mainly produces grain.

(h) We recommend that LFBF oppose any future increases in grain warehouse or other related fees or assessments.

Sweet Potato Recommendations

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1. We recommend that Farm Bureau closely monitor EPA and DEQ quality solid waste disposal and water quality standards for sweet potato processors and shippers and oppose efforts for more stringent standards being placed on them. We request the AgCenter and the LDAF to work along with the sweet potato industry to develop a more complete data base and plans for an effective solid waste disposal and water quality program.

2. We urge the continuance by the LDAF of such work and strict enforcement of the law concerning the control of sweet potato weevils with emphasis on seed beds, fields and storage house.

3. (a) We reaffirm our requests that the USDA continue the purchase of canned sweet potatoes of the cut and whole style packs processed in syrup for use in its proposed expanded direct purchase program for schools participating in the National School Lunch Child Care Program and other similar programs for depressed areas. We recommend that the newly-adopted USDA specifications for sweet potato French Fries be used to purchase sweet potato French Fries for Farm Bill authorized food purchase and feeding programs. We request that USDA increase purchases of fresh sweet potatoes as part of their surplus produce purchase program. We urge the Louisiana Congressional Delegation to continue its efforts to try to get canned sweet potatoes as described above included among the canned foods to be purchased in the future for the USDA for distribution to school and expanded child nutrition programs and also the Armed Forces. We urge the Louisiana Congressional Delegation to continue its efforts to try to get canned sweet potatoes, sweet potato French fries and sweet potato patties to be included among the canned and frozen foods purchased by USDA for distribution to schools, child nutrition programs and the Armed Forces. We also urge that USDA announce its purchase intentions no later than September 1.

(b) We recommend that Farm Bureau contact the proper authorities, stressing the need for the continuation of USDA purchasing of sweet potatoes for the National School Lunch Program.

(c) We further recommend that Farm Bureau encourage the marketing of fresh sweet potatoes for both the school lunch program and the military.

(d) We request that USDA tailor its bids for sweet potato products that are acceptable to children's taste, price not being the sole determining factor.

4. We recommend that activities of the Sweet Potato Advisory and Development Commission be increased in the state and national promotion area.

5. We support special emphasis on research to control soil insects, such as white grubs, cucumber beetle, sweet potato weevil, white fringed beetle, sugarcane beetle, and urge that the USDA and the AgCenter officials continue to place a high priority on this research through allocation of adequate funds and personnel. We further recommend continued research into the developing of insect resistant varieties.

6. We urge the Louisiana Congressional Delegation to continue to support appropriations requested by the Extension Service.

7. We commend the AgCenter Sweet Potato Research Station at Chase, Louisiana, and also the coordinated efforts of the LSU School of Plant, Environmental and Soil Sciences for the good work they have done in the past in developing new sweet potato varieties and foundation seed. We urge them to continue to expand their operations wherever possible in an effort to develop more new commercial varieties. We also urge the Station to pursue additional research in cultural practices.

8. We support the continuance of the quality standards established by USDA in the determination of Grade A canned sweet potato products.
9. We recommend that Farm Bureau continue to place a priority on the FQPA. We ask that Farm Bureau closely monitor the FQPA and oppose actions that would cause losses of labeled chemicals before viable alternates are commercially available. We further recommend that accurate use data be required in all evaluations.
10. We commend the AgCenter Sweet Potato Research Station for their outstanding achievements in supplying virus-tested seed stock for the Louisiana sweet potato industry and support continued advancements in the program. We further encourage Farm Bureau to aggressively promote the purchase of LSU Ag Center virus-tested foundation sweet potato planting stock among Louisiana producers in order to improve sweet potato variety performance within the state and provide the LSU Ag Center with an annually recurring revenue stream to support sweet potato research projects.
11. We recommend that Farm Bureau support changes to the USDA Fill Weight Standards, when necessary, so the standards stay up to date with current sweet potato varieties to insure the best quality when canning and packaging sweet potatoes.
12. We recommend that Farm Bureau pursue a well-designed Permanent Sweet Potato Crop Insurance Program that offers affordable crop insurance coverage to all sweet potato producers. We support lower rates for crop insurance, coverage in storage for 60 days after harvest, and permit use of G-1, G-2 and G-3 seed. We support revised crop insurance yields for sweet potato farmers selling to the Lamb Weston sweet potato French fry facility and other situations where the entire crop yield is sold.
13. We support LSU Department of Food Sciences research projects that will develop additional uses and new value-added products for sweet potatoes.
14. We support Sweet Potato Crop Insurance policy definitions for “field pack production” and “marketable” that keep non-marketable sweet potatoes from being counted as crop yield in crop insurance loss determinations. We recommend that sweet potatoes be considered a commodity “seldom consumed raw” under the Food Safety Modernization Act regulations.
15. We support a sweet potato crop insurance program endorsement that provides an extended coverage period to insure sweet potatoes for field damage that appears in storage in a policy with adequate coverage provisions and reasonable premium costs.
16. We support the following provisions in the Sweet Potato Crop Insurance Program: **(See Comments Above)**
 - Unit coverage
 - A coverage period for field pack production that ends on November 15
 - Coverage on new commercial varieties
 - Requirements that crop insurance adjusters must be trained to grade sweet potatoes according to USDA Grade Standards
 - Permit different units of production to be stored within a common approved sweet potato storage facility with tamperproof security bin identification used to identify production from each unit.
 - Reduced rates for insuring irrigated acres of sweet potatoes
 - A 60 day storage endorsement with sweet potato storage facilities certified according to their ability to maintain climate within the storage facility.
 - Revised yields for farmers contracting entire fields to a processor.
17. We would like to commend the LSU Ag Center for developing Sweet Potato Educational Exhibits for school teachers in Louisiana and showing the sweet potato exhibit to students at the Ag Expo in Delhi and Ag Magic in Baton Rouge.