



Primary Election 2020: Candidate Surveys

Each election, the Arizona Farm Bureau surveys candidates who are running in races that are particularly important to Farm & Ranch Country. This year, we have selected a handful of districts to highlight prior to the Arizona Primary Election on August 4, 2020.

Each candidate listed below was asked to provide a 200-word answer to the following questions:

1. ***Arizona’s agriculture and natural resource industries are important economic engines for Arizona and our rural communities. In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge facing these industries today?***
2. ***As an elected official, what role will you play in helping our members overcome this challenge?***

Unless otherwise noted, each race listed below has a contested party primary. Arizona Farm Bureau staff contacted each candidate running in the party primary using the contact information provided by his or her candidate committee to the Arizona Secretary of State.

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Legislative District 1, House Republican Primary

Selina Bliss

Because I have lived in Arizona since 1971, I have a deep respect for our rich history. When I think of the agricultural and natural resources that brought us to where we are today, I am reminded of Arizona's Five C's: copper, cotton, citrus, cattle, and climate which served an important role in our early economy, especially in agriculture and ranching. When it comes to current economic drivers, farming and ranching is still integral to our success as well as to the culture of Arizona.



I see two challenges to Arizona farmers and ranchers that are closely related and those are private property and water rights. Private property rights and access to water for agricultural purposes are being threatened by the growth occurring in Arizona and the need for residential and commercial development. The balance between supply and demand is tenuous, as people who move here compete for land and water from farmers and ranchers, but also need farmers and ranchers to provide the goods we all depend on. My concern is the urge to take from our natural resources without a long term plan to sustain our natural resources, thereby putting an increased dependence on resources outside of Arizona. I am running for office out of the desire to have Arizona achieve its full potential. Maintaining our independence on food and water is critical to Arizona achieving its full potential.

Coming from a family of farmers and ranchers, I see the importance of how governmental policy affects practices. There are several roles I can be part of when looking at legislation that protects private property and water rights for farmers and ranchers.

1. To secure property and water rights it is important that land and water use through planning and zoning for development is retained at the local level and balanced so as not to violate private property rights nor affect the production of farm goods and/or ranching operations.
2. The Arizona Department of Resources (ADWR) needs more regulatory authority to oversee the active management areas in Arizona. From what happened in Arizona with Saudi Arabian agriculture moving in and pumping groundwater to grow and export alfalfa, it appears laws are necessary that separate agricultural and municipal water use as well as protect domestic water and agriculture.
3. Water policy could be strengthened by the legislature by motivating persons and communities to reach safe yield through conservation and the efficient use of water supply, along with recharge as a partial approach to reaching safe yield. Alternate water sources such as desalination plants and the use of reclaimed water should be considered. Conserving water through a tiered water rate for domestic users is a monetary incentive to conserve water.
4. Local agriculture needs to be protected and expanded upon in the areas of agricultural tourism. This is a win-win for communities in the area of revenue generation for sales tax as well as promoting an educated population that knows where their food comes from.

With several challenges facing Arizona's agricultural and natural resources, it will be important to stay educated and current on the challenges facing the industry and act appropriately to protect Arizona's agricultural interests.

Judy Burgess

Under the Governor’s Drought Contingency Plan, irrigation shares would be cut yearly if full allotment was not utilized. This practice would create a climate of wasting valuable water shares or lose it as well as reduce private property value. Also, concerns have been expressed that putting meters on rural wells are an encroachment on private property rights and eventually a fee would be placed on water withdrawals.



I am a very strong private property rights advocate and have actual experience working in the mining industry. Would love the opportunity to work with Representative Griffin on the Water and Energy Committee again.

Quang Nguyen

To me, water has always been an issue here in Arizona and had that discussion just recently regarding farming. Food on the table is critical and I can't think of a more important issue than this. As a legislator, I will work to make sure farming has the water and resources it needs to continue to feed us.



Farm Bureau did not receive a response from: Ed Cocchiola, Steven Sensmeier

Legislative District 4, House Race

Note: there is no contested primary in this race.

Charlene Fernandez (Dem)

Arizona’s agriculture and natural resource industries are important economic engines for Arizona and our rural communities. In your opinion, what is the biggest challenge facing these industries today?

Water is certainly the toughest long-term challenge that I see. I proudly represent the largest lettuce and leafy greens producing area in the country, Yuma, Arizona. Therefore, I recognize the economic engine that drives Yuma’s economy. Lettuce and all crops require an adequate supply of water to continue production. Securing Arizona’s fair share of water rights is critical. Equally as important is ensuring a sustainable source of water for generations to come.



As we know now, the Colorado River was over allocated. Even when we are not in a drought, most believe that we will still have more rights awarded than water filling our reservoirs. That is why I was proud to join a bipartisan coalition to pass the Drought Contingency Plan.

I intend to continue to work with the Agricultural Industry to ensure Arizona’s water security. There is still more work to be done even after passing the Drought Contingency Plan. It is critical that we are at the table where the decisions are made. The plan is to continue to hold stakeholder meetings, hearings, and direct communication. My office continues to be open to those communications and I remain accessible at 928-580-643. As the leader of the House Democratic Caucus I intend to guide Democratic Caucus to continue to work for responsible water policy that benefits the whole state.

Geraldine Peten (Dem)

The most urgent challenge for Arizona's agricultural industry is how to access, sustain and protect our water resources so that we can all have clean, safe and a reliable supply of water for farming, drinking, household use and recreational purposes. Our legislature met this challenge by creating the Drought Contingency Plan in 2019 and investing in research to further support and sustain one of our most valuable resources ... water.



A next step would be to acknowledge and face the challenges that climate changes has upon our ecosystems and the intersections of air, water, and soil in our biosphere. As temperatures rise and water resources become threatened, we as inhabitants of earth must all learn what our responsibilities are to preserve our precious resources. Research, education and a heightened public awareness with simple, yet profound collective means of doing our part as individual citizens, farmers, businesses and the government could have positive impacts on our present and future existence.

The most critical juncture that brings this all together is the agricultural industry with the challenge of efficiently connecting our biosphere, with farming technology, supply chains and diverse infrastructures all with sustainable and economical operations. The production of agricultural products of fruits, vegetables, livestock, dairy and poultry are the life blood for our human existence. Therefore, it is imperative that we do everything possible to sustain the workforces that makes these operations possible, and continue to improve the infrastructure for interstate and international exports that brings food to the table. Thousands of families are dependent on the billion-dollar agricultural industry for the sustenance of life in all its facets.

As a State Representative for Legislative District 4, I will continue to work on:

- Extending and expanding the two-year fruit and vegetables incentive program;
- Support and fund infrastructure investments;
- Create incentives for students to major in agricultural and technology studies as it relates to farming and the mechanization of agriculture;
- Continue the research and development for sustainable water resources.
- Identify and operationalize ways and means of creating a high quality of education and life for all rural communities;
- The Covid19 pandemic sheds light on the critical need to develop and expand reliable internet technology and networks where people live, work and learn ... especially in rural and reservation areas.

Joel John (GOP)

Labor is perhaps the biggest challenge facing the Agricultural industry today. The role I'll play is to support state laws that make it easier for employers, in the Agricultural industry, to find labor and to use my role as a state representative to encourage our congressional delegation to create laws making it easier for the Agricultural industry to find labor. I'll also educate members of my party about the need for the agriculture industry to procure labor from across the border.



Legislative District 6, Senate Republican Primary

Sylvia Allen

The Covid 19 pandemic has shown that we have a problem with food distribution within our state. When Dairy farmers are dumping milk and vegetable farmers are disking in their vegetables, but store shelves are empty there is a problem.



Water will continue to be an important issue for the agriculture community. Distribution, wells, and irrigation systems should be protected. Also the eradication of salt cedars in water ways that impact water supply and cause flooding of farm land.

I do not agree with pressure to pass state regulations that force egg or farm animal producer into a narrowly designed production system. This should be left up to the farmer.

I serve on the Water and Agriculture Committee, I would be interested in putting together a taskforce to address the food distribution system in Arizona looking for solutions and how we can make improvements.

I voted for and will again, projects that clean up our river beds. I will vote for water agreements or projects supported by the Farm Bureau and I am open to working with the Farm Bureau on any of their issues and would carry bills.

Wendy Rogers

Arizona's congressional delegation must work to put an end to the adjudication process and federally reserved water rights.



Water sheds are an absolute mess as logging has ceased, small dog-hair pine thickets have taken over, and the Forest Service has adopted a "let it burn" attitude. Water sheds have been "managed" not by land stewards, but by judges in cases brought by the environmental community whose goal is to drive out all natural resource users.

Water sheds are vital to agriculture and urban areas of the state. Decades ago, the feds introduced the saltcedar tamarisk as an erosion control method. The saltcedar, however, has choked and infested water sheds throughout the state. The feds should be required to clean up the mess they created.

When forest reserves were created under the Organic Act, the two original purposes were silviculture and watershed management. Now both are ignored and have been replaced by recreation and wildlife concerns.

A concerted effort to revitalize water sheds should be a critical focal point of Arizona's congressional delegation. While the delegation cannot end the drought, it can push to restore watersheds, resulting in more water available for both agriculture and urban areas.

Legislative District 7, House Democratic Race

Note: there is no contested primary in this race.

Arlando Teller

Available water source is the biggest challenge for the industry. As an elected official, I will work for a water settlement deal which all stakeholders are comfortable with.

Farm Bureau did not receive a response from: Myron Tsosie



Legislative District 7, House Republican Race

Note: there is no contested primary in this race.

James "Jim" Parks

Many people believe that the greatest challenge for agriculture and natural resource industries is water. Yes, that is a big one, however, I don't think that it is the greatest challenge. Water and the environment are the commonly employed issues used to bash our farmers and ranchers with, but not the main challenge.

The underlying cause of the "unrest" is socialism. Socialism and the continual push by the "left" to subvert all issues in order to gain ground in the socialist revolution, has been a factor in how our country, and the world, have been governed since 1917.

As with the Bolsheviks in the 1917 Russian revolution, the "ISSUE IS NEVER THE ISSUE", the "issues" are only a tools used to cause the unrest necessary to de-stabilize the economy and the government.

The biggest challenge to agriculture is not any of the issues forced on agriculture by the left, the biggest challenge IS THE "LEFT"! The socialists have come to dominate our culture so heavily over the last 100 years that they now control the news media, our public schools, our children, our way of life, health, some churches, and even our vocabulary. The terms we use for factions in the political landscape, "left" and "right", were coined by the communists about the time of the Spanish Civil War in 1936, to differentiate between the two branches of socialism that were fighting against each other in the Spanish Civil War. In that war, the Russians were backing the Spanish Communists, and Hitler and Mussolini were backing the Spanish Facists under Francisco Franco. The Facists won, and Francisco Franco survived World War II, ruling Spain into the mid-1960's when he died. Franco was the longest surviving Facist dictator, even ruling longer than Juan and Eva Peron in Argentina.

Even now, we have the changes in our vocabulary affecting our speech. The violent extremist group, Antifa takes their name from "anti-Facists", a thinly veiled admission that they are communists.

We are seeing right now, a communist revolution in our United States of America.

Agriculture is one of the main battlefields, as they must control agriculture in order to control the food supply. The side that controls the food supply will control the people. Control of the people must be achieved in order to fully implement the Communist Revolution.



We, the people in agriculture must come to understand how very important we are in the fight to retain our Freedom, our Constitution, our way of life, and our Great Country.

People of American Agriculture, please do not allow yourselves to be distracted by the issues of the left, we must keep our eyes on the goal, we must fight for the issues, and while fighting the issues, we will be fighting for the U.S.A.!!!

I, Jim Parks, will stand with agriculture and for agriculture in every battle.

David Peelman

Without a doubt, water is the biggest issue! Arizona is growing, particularly in the Phoenix metropolitan area; water is in demand to sustain the population growth, and without it we don't have life. Without a plentiful supply of water, our agriculture industry will suffer. We must husband our water resources to ensure we have a viable agriculture industry and drinking water for a burgeoning population.



I will listen to concerned and interested parties to our need for water, research and investigate how best to meet the needs of a growing population, and agricultural needs for water. I will do all in my power to mitigate and stop waste, conserve this most precious resource for the benefit of all people and industries. Arizona must not grow so large, and so fast without ensuring the essential need for water is endangered of not being able to sustain life and the needs of the all Arizonians

Legislative District 8, House Republican Primary

Neal Carter

Both agriculture and natural resource industries require assurance of adequate water resources, but a close second challenge is a general attitude where city people (and Arizona is becoming more and more a city-fied place) misunderstand or lack respect for agriculture. City people need to remember that every day they interact with agriculture through the food they eat and that the materials that make up their iPhones, etc. are mined from the ground.



Agriculture in Pinal County is a 2.3 Billion dollar industry and Pinal is in the top 4% of agriculture counties nationwide. Both industries survive economic downturns in a way that others do not, and therefore provide the cornerstone of a diversified economy.

Arizona in general needs to remember that resources are shared, and that when public policy dictates use of resources without the input of all communities, the public is never well served. The Drought Contingency Plan has affected Pinal farmers with much more impact than most city dwellers, and in most cases Pinal farmers have been here longer. Water makes the difference between existence and non-existence for a farm: a 10% water cut could mean the difference between profitability and non-profitability, unlike city activities, so water issues here must particularly be carefully considered.

Our district needs strong advocates for rural and agricultural needs. There is a lot of work that has been done but a lot more work that needs to be done. For one, education of the public in general and other members of the legislature in particular where it comes to water resources and their use is

essential. For another, Pinal and Gila Counties in particular need a champion negotiator, someone with a background in negotiating, brokering and putting together deals -- someone with the backbone to stand up for our communities but the patience to listen and the perseverance to see the process through to the end. Elected officials, especially at the state level, affect water policy as it pertains to the Drought Contingency Plan, the Central Arizona Project, groundwater pumping, the existence or non-existence of well metering, and many other issues.

My role at the legislature will begin with listening to the agriculture and natural resource community's needs, facilitating discussions among all those with vested interests, fighting to protect our shared goals, and demanding that policies that harm the agriculture or natural resource industries are abandoned in favor of balanced public policy that takes into account the concerns that these important industries face

David Cook

That is a good question but the challenges are very different for each industry:

Dairy- the price of milk and financing of dairies has placed them in a deep financial hole for the most. Just in District 8 we have had several dairy go out of business such as the Black Water Dairy, Shaun Dugan at 11 Mile Corner and his cousin just east of the CAC college campus in the past two years.



As for rural grazing permittees on FS allotments such as on the Tonto in District 8. The NEPA process has exhausted the permittees with the amount and length of time to complete a fair and impartial process for the renewal of their grazing permits which makes management decisions needed today impossible to implement because if there is a past NEPA it is generally over 25 years old. Today our science and technology is far advanced of what was then thought to be current as related to what we now know today.

Farming - water - in District 8 - there is adequate room and legal ability to pump ground water in Pinal but at what financial cost. If the cost to get the water to the crops is more than the market of the crop grown, you can see that spending more than your making is not sustainable over time. Yes markets fluctuate, but long term it may not be profitable.

Some farming operations in Pinal are experiencing shortages of San Carlos water and having to furlough parts of their ground. This adds more complications as in the past the county assessor would then want to reclassify the land as no longer agriculture. According to Supervisor Steve Millers Op-Ed recently, this could increase the tax bill by more than 10 times. I ran and the Gov signed a bill to help with this last year.

Foreign Markets - So some of the largest melon growers in the country are also in Pinal County - so NAFTA everyone thought was a bad deal but in NAFTA there were protections for melon growers in the US against having the market flooded with melons from Mexico. With the new trade deal that protection no longer exist.

Back to water. Farmers in the Gila Valley are facing issues with unsettled water litigation and a problem labeled "hot lands" - that's a long subject - but I do believe with my skills and relationships that I can help solve this problem.

Another problem is that some of these old farm wells that were permitted and drilled and have been used for generations has been determined they are pumping sub-flow water (at some level) and now are being told that their water right is now at the current date of refilling instead of the original drill date. We need to fix this. In fact I just delivered a packet of what ADWR is sending out to people that are applying for new well drilling permits to the Speaker and Rep Griffin yesterday so we may have a conversation about our intent in past legislation this session and what they are actually doing.

The role I have always played is to get the facts from honorable trust worthy sources and organizations to be informed. Then hold stake holder meetings to determine what options are there to try and solve these issues for the people. We are elected to be voices and leaders on solving problems and there are currently only three of us agriculture business people serving at the legislature. We must continue to educate and build those relationships with our fellow members on both sides of the isle not just one.

Agriculture does not pick a party, so at anytime we can, we need to think the same way when it comes to agriculture issues and policy.

Thank you. And in full disclosure, I am a FB member in two states - AZ and OK.

Frank Pratt

Unquestionably, the biggest challenge for these industries is water. The source of water for agriculture must be available to raise food, textile crops and livestock of all nature. Ground water is of high concern for Pinal County and other areas in the state, while surface water is under pressure throughout the state. In addition, there are other significant issues including changing market issues. We have seen or experienced dairy milk dumping and empty store shelves. There is also a need for assured access to a labor pool and affordable housing for the that labor pool.



My perspective of representation for the agriculture and natural resource industry is enhanced by the fact that I have prior experience in farming and ranching. My family is still in agriculture. While I understand these critical issues more thoroughly, I cannot solve these issues alone. We must work together to help each other as a group to address these complex matters.

Legislative District 10, Senate Race

Note: there is no contested primary in this race.

Kirsten Engel

The biggest challenges facing these industries is ensuring water availability and closing the digital divide. With respect to water, Arizona continues to face significant challenges in terms of water availability. Water from the Colorado River, which supplies on-River agriculture with water directly and farms in central and southern Arizona indirectly through the CAP canal, has always been over-allocated and now suffers permanent declines due to climate change. Research suggests that, by 2050, climate change will contribute to a further 20 percent drop in the River's streamflow. This is particularly problematic for farmers in irrigation districts using CAP water, as they will suffer reductions if/when Lake Mead lake levels drop further than the current Tier Zero. The digital divide that affects so many rural areas and is especially problematic for schooling for students in such



areas, is also an issue for the farming and natural resource industries as more and more commerce and technology requires high speed internet.

Water sustainability is a challenge for all of Arizona and every sector must do its part to address it. The Drought Contingency Plan was historic, not just because it addressed conditions of future water shortage before they occurred, but because every sector was at the table when the deal was negotiated, every sector had skin in the game, and every sector gave away something to make the deal a reality. I will work with representatives of Arizona's farm and natural resource industries to put in place similar plans to address our water future. For agriculture, the solutions likely lie in the better use of technology, switching to less water intensive crops where feasible, and rule revisions to incentivize water reuse and conservation. With respect to the digital divide, I supported SB1460 (Borelli) to enable electric co-ops to provide broadband service. This is just one innovative solution to the digital divide that we need to close in order to ensure that our farming and natural resource industries can compete in a 21st century digitally-connected society.

Legislative District 11, Senate Democratic Primary

JoAnna Mendoza

Arizona's water drought has been a concern for decades. We have taken some steps in the right direction to protect and conserve our water supply, but we need to do more. Surface water is not currently able to meet all our water needs, which has caused groundwater to be pumped at alarming rates. Groundwater depletion will lower our water table and increase the cost of water, which will hit folks living in rural areas the hardest. We also need to be vigilant about foreign corporations attempting to buy up farmland and further depleting our domestic water sources.



Urban and rural areas shouldn't have to compete for water. Unfortunately, rural communities like those in District 11 are often the last to get funding and services and are too often forgotten because there is no advocacy or voice for their interests. It's vital that we stay informed about current developments in Arizona water rights so that we continue to be part of the conversation. Especially with the rapid growth of Arizona's population, we need to explore additional options increasing our water supply. This could include a statewide effort and funding for programs such as building water storage facilities, watershed management, desalination plants, rainfall harvesting, and hydrological research to augment water supplies. As Arizona State Senator in Legislative District 11, I will be your voice and fight to protect our rural way of life.

Linda Patterson

I was raised in a family who were farmers and ranchers from the 1800's through five generations. Accordingly, I have insight into the culture of farming and ranching families and know the challenges, struggles, realities and pride that comes with those who are dedicated to the land and its resources. In addition, I understand that these individuals are very involved in local, state and national politics because their way of life can be enhanced or destroyed by politicians who represent them.



Perhaps the greatest challenge Agricultural and Natural Resource Industries face Arizona is being able to hold on to what they have attained. Farming and ranching exist in a time of rapid change where the very essence of what these industries have contributed to our state and their way of life are being threatened and hit from all directions. In specific:

- Each year, **water becomes more scarce in Arizona** and has caused those with vested interests in this resource to jostle a bit more fiercely to hold on to their precious shares of this vital resource. Towns and cities are pivoting to secure their water rights to the point of disregard to those areas downstream in Pinal and Pima counties.
- **Arizona's population is growing and land developers want their piece of the money-making pie.**
- **Politicians** are involved in this milieu; some know little or about the complex issues involved in farming/ranching. Electing leaders who are intelligent, aware and able to hear the concerns of these families is paramount.
- **Most people involved in making decisions about these issues are not aware of the importance of following the data, research and best practices** necessary to forward common-sense solutions.

I have a demonstrated record and solid reputation of serving others. My life in civil service has always been focused of intervening with individuals and organizations facing complex problems and being a part of a collaborative approach to address concerns. I know that I possess the skills and attributes to successfully deliver what farmers and ranchers want and need and am confident that I can earn your trust. I have worked with diverse individuals with challenging needs and have excelled in not only listening -but hearing what is necessary. It will be my greatest privilege to serve as your voice in the state senate.

Legislative District 13, House Republican Primary

Tim Dunn

In the short term during the economic recovery from COVID, we need to have stability in the markets. With Federal and state policy focused on domestic production instead of imports taking advantage of COVID closed processing facilities. With safe workplace environment for processing facilities, AZ Agriculture can lead in feeding the world. We also need sound economic policy that gets the food service industry the ability to buy food products.



In the big picture for Arizona agriculture, water policy in its numerous forms is the number one issue. Educating greater Arizona that the need for Water in agriculture is the life blood of the Arizona Economy. Rural Arizona especially will be a key focus as we plan water policy now for the next twenty five years. The second biggest issue is immigration policy that allows for a legal work force for agricultural while maintaining strict border security.

Communication with your members and elected leaders is key to being an effective legislator who understands rural Arizona and agriculture. As vice chairman of the rural caucus I along with our other rural caucus members, with input from your organization, have been effective the past two years in

influencing the outcome at the capital. As Chairman of the Land and Agriculture committee and Vice Chairman of Energy, Water, and Natural Resources committee, I will continue to keep Agriculture water use and rural issues like broadband infrastructure funding and business friendly policy at the forefront of our agenda. The Arizona Legislature has an opportunity to help fund border security with the border sheriffs to help stop the drug trade coming across our southern border. I will continue to advocate for that.

Steve Montenegro

I've had the privilege of representing Legislative District 13 for almost a decade. Our district includes Yuma and has strong farming interests throughout. I know that agriculture and natural resources industries are essential to the economy of our district and our state. There are many challenges that our farming community face, such as the fluctuating prices of commodities, having the market flooded with produce and commodities from foreign markets, having to deal with the NEPA and having to deal with grazing permits to name just a few; the greatest challenge, however, is protecting its water rights.



As a representative and senator I have fought to protect Yuma's water and our district's agricultural interests, I have stood up to leaders of both parties to protect our water rights and agricultural needs and I have been effective. I've been able to build strong relationships with many of the farming families in our district and along with Senator Kerr will continue to fight for them. I have the experience and a record of being a strong voice and leader for the agricultural and natural resource interests in our district and state.

Joanne Osborne

I have had the pleasure of representing Legislative District 13 for the past two years. Having the incredible agriculture community of Yuma, has been an honor and highlight to my term. I have had the privilege of serving on the state Land and Agriculture Committee and have heard of many issues that negatively and positively affect Agriculture and our Natural Resources.



We all know, even with the passing of the Drought Contingency Plan, which I voted for, Water will always be a top priority not only to the state, but definitely to agriculture! Another top of mind topic is of course Covid19. The hardworking "essential" workers that will be needed for harvest, process and distribution will be critical in the coming months. I continue to advocate for Rural Broadband and helping where I can with the Food Supply Chain: Farm – Distribution – Transportation – Grocery Store – Table

As your elected official, being a conduit for communication is critical. I know it is cliché, but we truly are all in this together. I've done what I can in participating in weekly Zoom meetings with the Yuma sector – hearing about Covid and Border issues, plus I am always close by listening and speaking with the farmers and ranchers themselves. I have also for many years recognized and supported the Future Farmer and am the proud mother of a former FFA State Officer.

Lastly, I am proud to recognize the fundamental and essential work it takes to Feed our Fellow Man!
Thank You!

Legislative District 15, House Republican Primary

Jarret Hamstreet

My biggest concern for our agricultural and natural resource industries is policymakers who place it on the economic “back burner” in favor of other industries like manufacturing or high-tech. A robust, well-diversified Arizona economy includes a thriving agricultural and natural resource sector and we should not overlook this important sector when allocating state economic development dollars.



Although I am in the technology business and am seeking to represent a suburban district in the Legislature, I know that my constituents eat food, drink milk, wear cotton clothes and rely daily on the outputs of our agricultural and natural resource industries. I will work to ensure that the state is investing in the growth and development of these industries along with other industries key to Arizona’s long-term economic success.

Steve Kaiser

Agriculture in Arizona is an important part of our economy and provides a vital resource for our state and nation. There are several challenges that I see facing this industry. First, of course is water and the growing demand from the residential sector. The second, which is closely related to the first is the amount of new home development that is happening where farming and ranching used to take place. I also see a greater regulatory burden on agriculture as consumers and the media demand things such as gmo free, organic, all natural, free range. These are all becoming marketing buzz words but there are real world regulatory burdens that follow closely behind.



As an elected official the first thing that I would want to do is dig deep into this industry and understand better where the struggles are. I was born in Illinois and my parents had many friends that had family run farms. We cannot feed the world without growing crops that are genetically modified to reduce infestation or to be more drought tolerant. These are ways in which humans have been feeding themselves for generations. Creating better crops and better livestock through breeding and cross pollination have benefited humankind. I would be excited to learn more about the industry and to tour farms and ranches to see first hand how operations are conducted. That way I can become a stronger advocate for a vital resource to our state and nation.

Justin Wilmeth

The biggest challenge is the rural-urban divide between Phoenix/Tucson and everywhere else in the state of Arizona. As Maricopa County has boomed in population, much focus has been placed on how to keep up with that growth in the Valley and ensure the Phoenix area continues to prosper. And that growth is great for the state. However, I do see it hurting agriculture and rural communities because so much focus has been placed on the major population centers. And, with roughly half of all legislators residing in Maricopa County, we need to elect members who remember where dinner actually comes from. I would be one of those members, advocating for agricultural issues at every turn.



By being a legislator for all Arizonans, not just my constituents in LD-15. My district is largely suburban, so agricultural issues don’t rank highly here. But my plan is to make it known to my district constituents

just how important Arizona agriculture really is to them. The Five C's are Arizona's tradition, legacy and history and they are all about agriculture. I have a deep love and history with agriculture. My family owns approximately 6,000 acres of farmland in Oklahoma and Texas. We focus on wheat, sorghum and soybean. I understand the plight of the farmer, having seen how impacts my family. I understand the challenges and issues and will work diligently as a legislator to ensure their interests are heard at the state Capitol.

Legislative District 15, Senate Republican Primary

Nancy Barto

The biggest challenges facing agriculture are water policy and federal and state clean energy mandates.

I will continue to partner with agriculture and natural resource industry leaders to ensure Arizonans can continue to benefit from these vital economic drivers and oppose overreaching regulations and mandates.



Farm Bureau did not receive a response from: Heather Carter

Legislative District 16, House Republican Primary

Lisa Godzich

The biggest challenge for Arizona's agriculture and natural resource industries is ensuring and adequate water supply, not just for now but for the future. Our farmers in Yuma, who produce over eighty percent of the nation's winter leafy green vegetables, are models of wise water use. Arizona farmers are doing their part to be responsible; they should be protected from other states or industries that would imperil that supply.



I would make sure that any legislation or regulation that would negatively impact the water supply for our agriculture would be strongly opposed.

Farm Bureau did not receive a response from: John Fillmore, Jacqueline Parker, Forest John Moriarty

Legislative District 21, House Republican Primary

Randy Miller

Our agriculture and natural resources are more than just an important economic engine, they are necessary for our survival as a society. Our water resources are dangerously low, as a State we have granted control over one of our most valuable resources, our water, in part of the upper west side of the valley, to a Canadian owned company. A foreign company has control over our water. Let that sink in.



We have a rogue federal agency that in my opinion has no constitutional basis for existing, that being the EPA. They have partnered with the Sierra Club to victimize private landowners

and farmers by illegally trespassing on their lands to identify “Endangered species” and then file lawsuits to prevent use of the land. These rogue agencies, stacked with liberal lifetime administration hierarchy become administrative weapons to implement their “Legal Plunder” of the people. We saw this at the Navajo Pumping station with the Obama administration, effectively shutting down the plant through fines and regulation. Our state Corporation Commission failed at intervening on our behalf, under our state constitution as well as our state legislators. This costs not only jobs for the Navajo tribe and the community of Page Arizona, it costs us in power, clean power due to all the renovations done due to attempts to comply with the EPA, but a source of water to the valley pumped from the station.

This is just an example of the issues we face in Arizona, a lack of state control by legislators under the 10th amendment and lack of legislative intervention to ensure the US Constitution is upheld. There is nothing in Article I, Section 8, that grants policing authority with organizations such as the EPA, Department of Education (Education isn’t mentioned in the constitution) or many other of the federal agencies.

The governor has a committee that is to do nothing but evaluate constitutionality of federal actions. Never been organized or used, at least under this governor. This could be a tool used if manned appropriately with citizens impacted by these issues, like ranchers and farmers for instance, but it is not.

Under Article 2, Section 3, of Arizona’s constitution which was ratified in 1912, and signed by congress allowing us to become a State, it states that the people or legislature can propose and pass laws that declare certain federal acts as unconstitutional and not use any of our resources i.e. staff, vehicles, buildings and money, for instance, to enforce these federal laws. This would also mandate our Sheriffs to not allow federal agencies to attempt enforcement in Arizona. Pretty nice isn’t it?

I currently travel the state and teach our constitutions as the Director of the Constitutional Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association of Arizona. I will continue to educate and teach as a legislator, other legislators and fight on the floor against any and all legislation that supports federal mandates, damn any associated unconstitutional federal dollars.

I will propose and implement my own committee just on these issues and will welcome and encourage representation from a member or two from the Arizona Farm Bureau Federation, the power industries, our state water resources office and others just to address federal regulation policies and the practice of “Sue and Settle” used effectively against ranchers, farmers and private land owners by the EPA and the Sierra Club. From this committee any one of the three available constitutional methods to stop these encroachments will be done by the group. This should be a watchdog group.

I also want to propose legislation that prohibits any foreign company having any ownership or control over our natural resources. This might even be a violation of Article I, Section 8, Clause 3, The Commerce Clause, without permission from Congress under Article I, Section 10, Clause 3, if it can be shown there is a controlling interest with the State, that being Canada. It is a socialist country. Even with this ridiculous globalist practice, it shouldn't be allowed in Arizona. These are our resources and for our citizens and therefore should be controlled with our interest in mind.

It’s time Arizona stood up for our state, it’s people and our property rights. I look forward to continuing my fight as a State Representative.

Kevin Payne

The biggest issues facing the industry are water and access to legal labor.

I seek advice from the Rural Caucus, Senator Kerr, Reps Dunn, Cook and Pierce. I understand food does not come from stores, it is grown by farmers and raised by ranchers.

Farm Bureau did not receive a response from: Beverly Pingerelli



Legislative District 23, House Republican Primary

John Kavanagh

The largest threat to agriculture and the natural resource industries are over-regulation by all levels of government. While much of these regulations involve environmental issues, land use, archeological claims and access regulation can also be an issue. For agriculture and mining, water regulation is also of concern.

I have a long history of opposing unnecessary government regulation and ensuring that when it needs enactment, it does not unnecessarily impact land owners and businesses. I will continue along that path.

Farm Bureau did not receive a response from: Joseph Chaplik, Jay Lawrence



Legislative District 24, Senate Democratic Primary

Lela Alston

Agriculture and natural resources are an inseparable part of our state's economy. I believe the top issue facing both these industries is our water supply. Water is crucial to the success and growth of agriculture and natural resources and strengthening Arizona's economy. We must have a secure and sustainable water supply that meets the needs of these industries as well as the needs of other water users.

Securing Arizona's fair share of water from the Colorado River is a must to support these industries and other water needs. Investing in water management infrastructure and programs while encouraging the responsible conservation of water should be our goal. Additionally, we need to protect water supplies and aquifers in non-Active Management Areas.

As a State Senator, I always want the entire state and its industries to succeed, even ones without a significant presence in my legislative district. I will always be willing to meet with the Arizona Farm Bureau Federation and individual members to understand the challenges facing the industry and smart solutions to overcome them. I have a history of working well with both sides of the aisle to find solutions that work. I will continue to be a friend to your members, whose work forms a backbone of our state's economy.

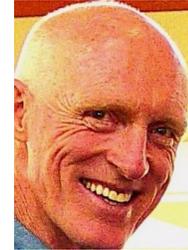
Farm Bureau did not receive a response from: Ryan Starzyk



Legislative District 25, House Republican Primary

Rusty Bowers

The certainty of long-term water supplies that are not at risk of being shortened or discontinued for the needs of cities or other uses. I want to have a vibrant agriculture anywhere we can – as the bumper sticker says: No Farms, No Food!



I have been active in trying to promote the chiefly rural agriculture strength by knowing it, serving it and protecting it. We have tried to streamline the water adjudication process by funding data digitization and setting up a group through the U of A to assist claimants in filling out their paperwork correctly, making sure they don't panic, and help in all other non-legal methods. We will continue on the general path of helping AG wherever possible.

Kathy Pearce

Water always comes up when I talk to people about these issues. Obviously everyone makes the connection for agriculture but even industries like mining are big water users. But there are so many other potential issues related to growth encroaching on agricultural or mining property (sand and gravel esp), that if I had to pick a single issue it would be that the general population has no idea how valuable and economically important these industries are to Arizona. If they did, they would be better neighbors, they would work more closely with these industries to ensure their viability, etc.



I'd practice what I preach. Give everyone a seat at the table, make sure that farmers and ranchers and dairy and mining etc. are a part of relevant discussions. And then spread the word. Whatever the issue is, we have to be constantly informing people and making everyone around us more knowledgeable. Once they understand how important it is then they start to spread the word. We wouldn't want to live in a world where we had to live without the things that are grown, raised, or mined, so what can we do to work better with those providing these resources?

Farm Bureau did not receive a response from: Michelle Udall

Legislative District 29, House Democratic Primary

Richard Andrade

We have to have a balance when it comes to these 2 industries. Az's agriculture is very important because it provides food on the table for many families, but we also have to recognize I believe one of the challenges has to do with our infrastructure. Making sure we have the roads to transport these products to the market. Another is water, making sure water is used wisely to meet the demands of the industry. The natural resources has to be balance as well. We need to preserve much of Az's landscape for future generations to come and not encroach on protected lands. For instance, mining, making sure after completion the landscape is returned as much as possible to the original landscape and to its natural beauty.



To continue to have dialogue with the Agriculture and Natural Resource Industries, by participating in stakeholder meetings and open forums. Another important factor is jobs these industries create and having conversations on the safety aspect related to these industries. The safety for the workers and safety for the consumers.

Teddy Castro

The biggest challenges facing our agricultural and natural resource industries is population growth. There is limited housing available for people to purchase which has driven land developers and home builders to expand in more suburban to rural areas. There are also water concerns to support these developments.



As an active real estate broker and elected official, I would like to ensure there are opportunities for your members to have a displacement program to allow continued agricultural and natural resource opportunities by having members provide input and direction that will support their needs.

Cesar Chavez

Infrastructure. Arizona has a great opportunity to be the largest agriculture trade partner for the United States. However, we lack in infrastructure and connecting the vast diversity of the state with other states, and essentially Mexico and Canada. As a leader in the conversations that lead to USMCA, I fought for infrastructure investment and am happy to see the progress seen at Mariposa POE, the main freeways, and will continue to push for greater investment.



I am the Vice President of the National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators. In this organization I have fought nationally for greater funding, common sense regulations, and pushing the international trade agenda. I will continue to do this to benefit our farmers and those involved in the industry.

Legislative District 29, House Republican Primary

Billy Bragg

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to respond to your concerns.

My name is Billy J Bragg Jr. I was born in Texarkana Arkansas. I was assigned to Like Air Force Base March 12, 1971. I am married and been married for 46 years.

Do to the medical situation with my son, my family was able to stay at Luke AFB the entire term of my enlistment.



Growing up in Arkansas my family had a farm. It wasn't big but we knew th importance of farming. Crops we grew was Corn, Sweet Potatoes, Okra, Black-eyed peas, Purple-hull peas, Tomatoes, Squash, Watermelons. We also had acres of Pecan Trees, Peach trees, Plum Trees and Pear Trees.

Growing up there teach you the responsibilities of taking care of your land and preparing your produce for the markets. I wasn't old enough to handle the financial part of it. When I got older I understood it and the hard work it took to do it. I'd rather do the Growing part.

What I noticed when I was stationed at Luke I love to see the Cotton fields, Feed Corn fields, Orange Groves and other fields here in Maricopa County. Over the years many farm lands are turning into urban housing developments. That saddens me to see that happening.

Farming is the MOST important part of our state. Without it pices will skyrocket on everyday vegetables. Feed for dairy products will increase.

I would get with the farming community to see what we could do to assist in making it easier to produce products. Keep price of water irrigation down and make sure that environmentalists will not try to create regulations to prevent farmers from fulfilling their dreams

Farm Bureau did not receive a response from: Alysia McMillan, Helen Fokszanskyj-Conti