

2021 Policies of the **Arizona Farm Bureau Federation**



*Adopted by Delegates of the 99th Annual
Arizona Farm Bureau Convention*

Arizona Farm Bureau

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Table of Contents

Purpose of Farm Bureau	2
Farm Bureau Beliefs	2
Land Use/Planning and Zoning	3
Public and Federal Land Natural Resources	9
State Land Natural Resources	17
Wildlife	20
Water	26
Active Management and Irrigation Non-Expansion Areas	30
Water Supply	31
Water Conservation	35
Drought	38
Water Quality	39
Air Quality	41
Energy	42
Environmental Quality	45
Agriculture Chemical Use	46
Food Safety	51
Weed, Insect, and Disease Control	53
Livestock and Animal Care	57
Commodities	66
Taxes and Spending	70
Regulatory	74
Law and Order	82
Elective Office and Referendums	84
Labor	85
Trade	89
Transportation	89
Department of Motor Vehicles	92
Health, Education and Welfare	93
Insurance	96
Public Relations	96

Within Farm Bureau	97
Administration and Policy Development.....	99
Index	101

PURPOSE OF FARM BUREAU

Farm Bureau is an independent, non-governmental, voluntary organization of farm and ranch families united for the purpose of identifying issues and formulating action to achieve educational improvement, economic opportunity, and social advancement and thereby to promote the well-being of agriculture and the nation.

Farm Bureau is the voice of agricultural producers at all levels; local, county, state, national; and international in its scope and influence. Farm Bureau is non-partisan, non-sectarian and non-secret in character. Farm Bureau, as a matter of principal and policy, will diligently work uniting divergent commodity interests. (Amended 2021)

FARM BUREAU BELIEFS

America's unparalleled progress is based on freedom and dignity of the individual, sustained by our founding principles rooted in Judeo/Christian values, commandments, and the sanctity of life. Economic progress, cultural advancement, ethical and religious principles flourish best where people are free, responsible individuals.

Individual freedom and opportunity must not be sacrificed in a quest for guaranteed "security." We believe in government by legislative and constitutional law, impartially administered, without special privilege.

We believe in the representative form of government, a republic as provided in our Constitution, in limitations on government power, in maintenance of equal opportunity, in the right of each individual to freedom of worship and in freedom of speech, press and peaceful assembly.

We believe the family is the basic building block of our society. We affirm and uphold marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

Individuals have a moral responsibility to help preserve freedom for future generations by participating in public affairs and by helping to elect candidates who share their fundamental beliefs and principles.

People have the right and the responsibility to speak for themselves individually or through organizations of their choice without coercion or government intervention.

Property rights are among the human rights essential to the preservation of individual freedom. We believe in the right of every person to choose an occupation; to be rewarded according to his/her contribution to society; to save, invest or spend; and to convey his/her property to heirs. Each person has the responsibility to meet financial obligations incurred.

We believe that legislation and regulation favorable to all sectors of agriculture should be aggressively developed in cooperation with allied groups possessing common goals.

We support the right of private organizations to require membership as a prerequisite for member services. (2016)

Arizona's Rights:

We ask that our governor and state legislators along with the support of our congressional delegation reclaim Arizona's state rights and our rights as citizens. We call upon our elected leaders to respect the constitution and the balance it created. Powers not delegated to the federal government by the constitution are reserved to the various states. This should be an immutable criterion for judging new federal actions, and our elected officials need to begin rolling back federal authority where it has usurped the letter and intent of the constitution with respect to state rights. (Amended 2019)

State Sovereignty Over Public Lands:

We believe the federal government should acknowledge that Arizona has had ownership of all non-private lands within the state's boundaries since statehood. Therefore, we support efforts to establish state sovereignty over public domain land currently managed by Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service subject to preexisting rights. (Amended 2021)

LAND USE/PLANNING AND ZONING

Property Rights:

We affirm in the strongest language possible our belief in the constitutional right to private property ownership and to protect those rights. We continue our efforts to protect private property rights and the rights of those who own land, timber or other valuable considerations associated with land ownership.

We oppose any government action that will abridge people's right to use their property for legitimate purposes unless there is full and equitable compensation for the reduction in the use of property.

We support the right of farmers and ranchers to hold on to their rights to own and use private property. We support legislation that affirms those rights.

Government entities should be required to perform an economic impact analysis before adopting new regulations or taking a government action that may result in a taking of private property such as open space, buffer strips, easements, view sheds, or greenbelt requirements. We urge legislative bodies and the courts to recognize the reality and disastrous effects of partial takings through regulatory actions. We urge a national recognition that partial takings should be compensated. Therefore, government should provide due process and compensation to the exact degree that an owner's right to use his property has been diminished by government action. We recommend legislation providing maximum protection through compensation when government projects devalue adjoining private property. Furthermore, we believe that the just basis for compensation is fair market value or the economic loss to the landowner.

We support a policy of no net loss of private lands in Arizona and of not having private lands removed from the property tax rolls. We support legislation that requires the consent of the

Arizona legislature before any more private property is transferred into federal or state ownership.

We oppose any legislation that would allow public access to or through private property without permission of the property owner or authorized agent. We support legislation that requires government officials to notify property owners and obtain permission before going onto private property.

We call for review of all government regulations that encroach on the rights of property owners. We urge amendment or deletion of statutes or regulations that allow government agencies, either on their own determination or in collusion with other government agencies, to establish rules of control which interfere with individual property rights. Members or employees of government agencies acting outside the scope of their authority or in violation of the constitution should be held personally liable, either civilly or criminally, for any damage that might occur.

We believe that businesses, industries and farmers who have to prove they are meeting environmental regulations should be reimbursed their expenditures if they were meeting the requirements before the government agency questioned their performance.

We support legislation that would protect innocent private property owners from property confiscation in the event that illegal substances are found, stored or growing on private property without the landowner's knowledge or consent. (Amended 2021)

Preservation of Agricultural Land:

We support preservation of agricultural land, both as a means of preserving the character of our communities and of continued local production of food, fiber and ornamentals, but not against the will of, or at the expense of, the property owner. (Amended 2020)

Conservation Easements:

We support the concept of conservation or agricultural easements as a means of preserving agricultural use of land, on condition of appropriate compensation to and voluntary agreement by the property owner.

Furthermore, we should investigate the possibility of transferring state or federal lands to the owner of agricultural land, for an in-kind trade of development rights. The owner of agricultural land would then be able to sell or develop this land for monetary reimbursement of their agricultural ground development rights.

We recognize agriculture and promote it as a conservation use for mitigation purposes. We recognize the conservation value of agricultural land for maintaining the long-term viability and sustainability of natural resources. We favor conservation leases over permanent conservation easements. (Amended 2021)

Notification of Adjacent Agricultural Use/Right to Farm and Ranch:

We support a producer's right to farm or ranch by being able to carry on normal agricultural practices and to be free from environmental regulations not based on sound scientific facts, not economically feasible, and/or not proportionately beneficial to the implementation cost.

We support establishing local ordinances protecting the producer's right to farm or ranch and freely market their products in and near municipalities.

We oppose any local ordinance that hinders a producer's right to farm or ranch for any reason. We encourage Farm Bureau to work to change any ordinance that imposes undue restrictions on normal agricultural practices or any undue burdens on farmers, ranchers or agricultural landowners.

We support positive disclosure by real estate sub developers/owners in closing escrow acknowledging current and historical farming and ranching practices adjacent to their existing or proposed businesses and subdivisions and acceptance by the buyer.

We support the distribution of "The Code of the West" and other similar publications (rules for rural living) through city and county offices as a teaching aid for people transitioning from urban to rural settings. (Amended 2020)

Land Use Planning:

Those who own or operate land have the major responsibility for its development. We believe that land use planning can best be accomplished at the local level of government and by private landowners. We urge farmers, ranchers, agricultural and natural resource representatives to become involved in all phases of land use planning, including zoning, regional comprehensive land use planning meetings, attending local county board of supervisor meetings, and planning processes by federal and state agencies.

Land use planning should provide for the utilization of land resources and the environment in a manner that will preserve and protect these resources while meeting the needs of our people. Careful consideration should be given to the proposals to retain prime agricultural land in production of food, fiber and ornamentals.

Cooperation between cities and counties regarding planning and zoning regulations is essential.

We support A.R.S. 11-804 which states that a county shall not designate private or state land as open space, recreation, conservation or agriculture unless the county receives the written consent of the landowner or provides alternative, economically viable designation in the general plan or zoning ordinance, allowing at least one residential dwelling per acre.

We support legislation to prohibit government entities from developing land use plans that limit or deny an individual's private property rights and enforcing this prohibition through strict monetary penalties or fines on the governmental entity for non-compliance and the award of attorney's fees and other expenses to the landowner adversely affected.

No zoning regulation or ordinance should be adopted or amended by any agency or political subdivision without formal and adequate notice to all affected owners of real property or other private property right who, upon receiving such notice, should have ample opportunity to appear directly or through chosen representatives before the agency or governing body. (Amended 2020)

Governmental Land Use Planning:

Federal legislation for state land use planning should be limited to financial assistance to encourage state planning. Funds available to the state under such a program should not be withheld to enforce compliance with federal standards.

We oppose legislation which would authorize or permit federal agencies to make direct management decisions in the field of private land utilization, or to prescribe the contents of, or to judge the adequacy of state land use plans.

We oppose action by government agencies, acting individually or collectively, which would result in:

1. Involuntary net loss of private land in any state; and
2. Action that would increase the amount of land exempt from state and local laws and property taxes.

We oppose the shift of rural lands from private ownership to public ownership for single use status because such shifts increase the tax burden on remaining property owners. We further oppose the transfer of public land from multiple use status to single use status when such transfers directly affect the integrity of the permittee's ranching operations.

Acquisition of land by government entities should result in no net loss of private lands or tax base. We support no net loss of private property in the state of Arizona to federal, state, county or municipal ownership. If a government entity or agency wants to purchase private property, they must sell other property at equal value that supports the tax base.

Private lands taken from the property tax rolls shall be required to pay an in-lieu tax equal to the tax on comparable property. (2020).

City Regional Plans:

Regional growth plans that incorporate both municipal and county areas should be ratified by the citizens residing within the boundaries of the planning area and not limited to only those within the municipal jurisdiction. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Zoning and Subdivision Permits:

We believe that a property owner should not be coerced into giving up real property without fair compensation as a condition precedent to obtaining zoning changes, i.e. subdivision lot tie or lot split, special use, building or other permits . (Amended 2021)

Trails:

We oppose the taking of property for trails through the power of eminent domain. Property shall be acquired for such purposes through mutual agreement between the property owner and the governmental entity and other organizations.

If a government agency or other organization establishes a trail, it shall ensure protection of adjoining landowners by providing adequate fencing and protection from liability issues related to the use of such facilities. (2020) (Originated in: Cochise County)

Zoning Use by Right:

In counties where urban-rural conflicts exist or are emerging, zoning regulations should contain language that specifies uses-by-right for farms, ranches, and equine properties. County Farm Bureaus should participate in developing the uses by right to assure that the regulations are reasonable and allow for the full use of rural properties. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Reservation Expansion:

We oppose the expansion of any current Native American reservation. We are also opposed to the creation of any new reservations. If the Native American tribes purchase land, they must continue paying the property taxes. (2017)

Agricultural Protection Act:

We support the Arizona Department of Agriculture in its efforts to obtain monies from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the State Parks Board and other sources to fund the Arizona Agricultural Protection Act and commission. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Improvement Districts:

We oppose municipal improvement districts, which place the burden of improvements on farmland. (2017)

Trespass Laws:

We support laws that hold property owners harmless of consequences of trespassing by others. Individuals who trespass should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

We oppose cross-country vehicular travel by trespassers. Firefighting companies should not trespass on private property without permission from the landowner unless it is to stop a fire that is life threatening or that involves any dwelling or permanent structure.

Recognizing the expense and continuing maintenance cost associated with the current posting requirements of A.R.S. 17-304, we support eliminating the ¼ interval posting. Posting of property corners and points of entry should serve as sufficient legal notification (Amended 2021)

Mineral Rights:

We recognize that mineral rights are a distinct and separate private property right and when separated from its original land parcel should be subject to the same regulation/taxation/or payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) formulas that other private property rights are subject to. We

support legislation that would ultimately encourage the return of separated mineral rights back to its original land parcel. (Amended 2019)

Eminent Domain and Condemned Property:

The taking of property or easements from property owners should be permitted only for a public purpose when there is a clear-cut need for the betterment of the public good and the completion of the project is guaranteed. In cases where private property is taken, we support prompt, just and fair market compensation. Any person owning property which is obtained by any governmental agency through condemnation procedures or by zoning regulation actions should have the options of being monetarily compensated or be offered an exchange of public property of equal value in another area of the county or state.

We further recommend, when parts of a parcel of land are seized through eminent domain, that not only the value of the part taken be considered for compensation, but also what future effect the taking will have on the entire parcel including future farming operations that may be hampered or permanently interrupted.

We oppose the use of eminent domain to condemn property in a manner inconsistent with the U.S. Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Arizona for redevelopment purposes.

Eminent domain should not be used to take private property when the property ultimately winds up in private hands. Increased tax revenue should not be used as a definition of "public use" or "public benefit" under the powers of eminent domain.

The state should compensate landowners of properties, that include navigable stream banks and beds if the state claims title to the land. (Amended 2021)

Flood Plain Designation and Condemnation:

Designation of a flood plain, floodway, conveyance channel, or the establishment of any maps or narratives affecting private property should immediately be deemed a “taking” of the affected property and full and adequate compensation should be paid for all such takings and for all other detriments caused by such designations.

We are opposed to condemnation of land and buildings and their uses, considered to be in a hypothetical one hundred year flood plain as declared by the Arizona Department of Water Resources, Flood Plain Division, and/or any county flood control district, without due consideration of public opinion and past history of the communities affected. (Amended 2021)

Annexation:

We oppose cities and towns dropping annexation signature requirements in areas adjacent to cities and towns.

We oppose allowing cities and towns to buy state owned land at the appraised value without the currently required public auction.

We oppose cities regulating land outside their legal boundaries. Involuntary annexation by a municipality should not impose a burden on existing agricultural activities or reduce the level of services received at the time of annexation, such as road maintenance. The failure of a municipality to provide full services, i.e. water, sewer and road maintenance, within 24 months will give the landowner the option to select de-annexation. Upon annexation, any governmental entity should not be allowed to change zoning on any annexed property without the landowner's written consent.

If a municipality violates a landowner's rights in a zoning or annexation proceeding, that municipality should pay the legal costs incurred by the landowner to protect his or her rights even if the municipality stops the proceeding.

We shall seek legislation to provide reasonable restrictions on cities and towns regarding annexation of government owned lands. Reasonable restrictions should include such things as requiring verifiable consent of a majority of the adjoining and nearby private property landowners and allowing annexation of government land only if it is less than two miles distant from the nearest private land which is already included in the city or town. (Amended 2021)

Airports and Military Air Bases:

There should be no restrictions on use of private property around military air bases without compensation at fair market value.

We support formation of agriculture preservation districts to prevent development of lands affected by airports and air bases. We support local, state and federal appropriations, to compensate landowners in agriculture preservation districts for lease or purchase of their development rights or purchase of land. (Reaffirmed 2020)

PUBLIC AND FEDERAL LAND NATURAL RESOURCES

Natural Resource Conservation Districts:

Candidates for Supervisor in a Natural Resource Conservation District shall be of legal voting age and an owner or partner in a farm or ranch operation within the boundaries of the district.

We encourage Farm Bureau members to participate on Natural Resource Conservation District (NRCD) boards and we support full state funding for the NRCDs and NRCD Education Resource Centers.

Criteria for approval of conservation projects funded through NRCDs should consider a balance of factors, including: conservation, economic, management, environmental, and production impacts. Control of decision-making concerning project funding should remain at the local level to facilitate reasonable consideration of all projects, district priorities, the resources affected, and the benefits of a project.

We support NRCS Cost Share Funding qualifications being changed to a minimum of 20 acres or \$15,000 gross agricultural income.

We support the move of the Arizona Association of Conservation Districts (AACD) from the Arizona State Land Department (ASLD) to combine with whichever agency they deem appropriate. We recommend formation of a selection committee that includes members of the NRCDs, to recommend appointees for the commissioner. (Amended 2021)

Department of Interior Reorganization:

We support the reorganization of the DOI and the move of headquarter positions for the BLM and FWS westward and the national office of BLM to the Rocky Mountain region. We urge the DOI to continue consulting with western states to ensure regional development considers state political boundaries and concerns. Each state and its government represent local needs and can capitalize on resources to address common objectives, including wildlife, land use planning, environmental quality, and water resources management. Continuing this approach, while also moving agency decision-makers closer to the lands they manage, would increase efficiency and decentralize decision-making, while also respecting state authority and improving the department's ability to consult and cooperate with state and local governments. (Adopted 2019) (Originated in: Cochise County)

Multiple Use and Sustained Yield of Public Lands:

Urban Americans are pressing all federal land management agencies to meet their demands for increased recreation areas and facilities. These demands have complicated orderly multiple use management and production. Arizona is encouraged to enter into a "Section 8 Memorandum of Understanding" with the Bureau of Land Management State Director and the Regional Forester.

All federal land management agencies are urged to explain the benefits of domestic livestock production on all federal lands through their public education programs. Particular emphasis should be placed on the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act of 1960, especially Sec 5(b) which very clearly states sustained yield:

“...means the achievement and maintenance in perpetuity of a high level annual or regular periodic output of the various renewable resources of the national forests without impairment of the productivity of the land.”

The philosophy of multiple use and sustained yield management (i.e. grazing, mining, forest and recreational use) should be adhered to; therefore, all federal land management agencies are required to seek input and incorporate the grazing industry's needs when considering the demands of other, possibly conflicting, uses.

We support the protection of the historical sheep driveways in Arizona as they are presently used. (Amended 2020)

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA):

We support the simplification and improvement of the NEPA process.

Categorical exclusions should be allowed for ordinary grazing permit renewals and for projects that improve range health by controlling invasive woody plant species. (Amended 2020)

Federal Improvement Fees:

When a government agency charges fees to process, review, and make decisions on private land improvement projects, those fees should be authorized by legislative action.

Obtaining a permit to work on federal land is the responsibility of the federal agency. If a federal agency chooses to outsource the NEPA, archeological, and technical assistance needed for permit compliance to a private company, the fees should be paid for by the responsible agency. (Amended 2021) (Originated in: Coconino County)

Federal Land Expansion:

We oppose federal land grabbing including any additional designation, by executive order or other federal action that would restrict lands within the state of Arizona.

We oppose multiple designations of public lands such as wilderness, riparian, wild and scenic and critical habitat.

We oppose any new wilderness, national park or national monument designations.

We oppose the establishment of a Sonoran Desert National Park, which would combine the Barry M. Goldwater Air Force Range, the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge, and the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument into one huge national park. We also oppose the establishment of the “Lower San Pedro National Refuge.” We oppose the proposed Great Bend of the Gila National Monument.

We oppose the expansion of the Walnut Canyon National Monument. We oppose the establishment of the Grand Canyon Watershed National Monument.

Any proposed restrictions to use of or access to federal land should require approval by Congress and passage, by majority vote, in a general election by each county(s) and state where the land is located.

We believe the threat of litigation should not deter agencies from their current mission and mandate.

We support the sale of federal government lands to private entities. This would increase the tax base and increase revenues locally, state and nationally. Those holding allotments and permits should have the right of first refusal. (Amended 2020)

Forest Management:

We support the Healthy Forest Initiative of the Department of Interior and U.S. Department of Agriculture and call for reintroduction of logging and other forest industries. We support range management practices, which advocate controlled burning and thinning.

We recommend the return of our western forests to their pre-settlement era tree and shrub densities. The unnaturally high tree and shrub densities caused by bans on logging, grazing, as

well as restrictions placed on controlled burns have led to the reduction of herbaceous grass in our forest. This change in the forest has led to decreased feed for herbivores, decreased water runoff in times of normal precipitation, severe flooding in years that have above normal precipitation, the destruction of riparian habitat, and the loss of valuable water in the arid west.

The mismanagement of the western forests has contributed to raging wildfires, disease and insect infestations killing millions of trees in the western states. The practices of logging, thinning, and grazing should be expedited to reverse the ongoing devastation this mismanagement has caused.

Using existing scientific studies, the management of our forestlands needs to be reviewed to identify the barriers to proper management of our western forest. Immediate action needs to be taken to remove these barriers.

One of those barriers has been the unending barrage of frivolous lawsuits brought by different organizations. Our forest management agencies do not have adequate funding to challenge the lawsuits brought forth by these groups. Because of this lack of funding, these agencies acquiesce to the demands made in these lawsuits to avoid eroding their operating budgets. We support a ban on these frivolous lawsuits. We support a separate operating budget to address these lawsuits and recommend that the attorneys general of the states sue the appropriate agency for gross negligence to recover:

1. The monies expended to fight the forest fires caused by improper management; and
2. The lost value of our timber resources resulting from the devastating infestation of the European Pine Bark Beetle. (Amended 2021)

Wildfire Management:

Policies for managing state and federal land and fighting fires have a direct impact on ranchers who have permits to graze livestock on state and federal land and on the private land that adjoins or is in close proximity to the state or federal land. We believe that USFS and other related federal and state government policies should adhere to the following guidelines:

1. A proactive approach in managing situations when the potential for fire is high and when fighting fires. Best land management practices includes allowing state and federal land management agencies to use prescriptive grazing and burning as tools to manage hazardous fuels to limit destructive wildfires. We support a streamlined process to do fire suppression and prevention. A comprehensive plan should include targeted grazing, green stripping, prescribed burning and permanent fire breaks such as roads, waivers from Endangered Species Act (ESA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the purpose of removing fuel loads, and other fire prevention tools to prevent or control future wildfires.
2. The USFS Albuquerque dispatch center and incident commanders need to work closely with local landowners, ranchers, and state forestry departments to better manage fire use, suppression, and resources. In non-federal land fire incidents or when fire moves onto non-federal land, state forestry departments and local landowner priorities should take precedence; the state forester must be consulted during the entire process regardless of

complexity or level of incidence; and the county sheriff's department should be the main security force. Decision authority for fire management strategies needs to be delegated to personnel familiar with local conditions.

3. Recognize that forest fire suppression and control strategies should be developed and implemented on a case by case basis. Current strategies need to be revised to return to the successful fire prevention and suppression tactics that were utilized in the past. In addition, policies calling for the re-introduction of fire into areas where intense fire suppression policies have been implemented in the past should be re-evaluated.
4. Developing cost shares, grants, subsidized loans or other financial assurances for capable logging contractors. To encourage infrastructure investment, contracts will be awarded with agreed upon duration, scope of work, and the possibility of extensions up to 25 years.
5. Agencies responsible for fire control and suppression need to accurately recognize and work to prevent the adverse impacts that are likely to occur following fires and the impact of fire control measures will have on fire recovery efforts.
6. When forest fires do occur, Wilderness Restrictions should be lifted in emergency situations to allow motorized equipment to be used to prevent catastrophic fire. Agencies tasked with fire control and suppression need to take responsibility for fully reimbursing private citizens for damages to private property sustained from actions taken in fighting the fires. For grazing permittees, this would include full compensation for costs related to restoring fences, pipelines, water tanks, livestock and other specified property on leased land. For owners of private property that adjoins or is in close proximity to state or federal land, the lead agency should be held responsible for the full cost of any damages that result from actions taken to fight the fires. These damages may be from suppression fires or flooding that may occur subsequent to the fires. The managing agency should be responsible to replace all damaged infrastructure within a specific amount of time.
7. Flood control needs to be a critical part of state and federal land management following fires. All actions that aid in controlling devastating floods and preventing the destruction of private property need to begin immediately when it is safe for personnel to enter burned areas. Funding should be set aside for mitigation and reclamation after a wildfire.
8. Restoring access to remote areas of state and federal land after flooding needs to be a high priority. Damaged roads and bridges need to be rebuilt immediately to allow Border Patrol and other law enforcement officials to conduct activities in conjunction with border security and law enforcement efforts.
9. The US federal government needs to recognize that in some cases forest fires result from the passage of illegal aliens through rugged areas near the border with Mexico. Border security is an essential factor in preventing the destruction of our forests and private property.

9.1 The cause and the cost of suppressing these fires should be reported by the affected administrative land agency annually to the Department of Homeland Security and tabulated as a cost of the failure of the federal government to secure the border at the international boundary.

10. Salvage of burned timber should always be allowed and encouraged.

11. We support the use of public and private partnerships for replanting fire-ravaged areas with native species where ecologically appropriate.

To assist in implementing these guidelines, we support:

1. A temporary 5-year suspension of NEPA and other pre-decisional requirements for fuel/fiber reduction activities in Arizona's Forests.
2. Consultation with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to protect habitat from wildfire.
3. Increasing the scale and extending the terms of saw and pre-commercial timber to allow for private investment in and around forests.
4. Instituting a grant program in Arizona where private residents could apply for funding of fire suppression activities.
5. Designating an office within the department of agriculture to assist farmers and ranchers in addressing any grievances or issues related to forest planning or to resolve other Arizona State agency issues surrounding forest management.
6. Convening a summit at which all interested individuals and advocate, or activist groups will be asked to sign a pledge to refrain from utilizing the courts or administrative processes for a period of five years while we consider and implement adaptive management measures to enhance the health of Arizona's forest lands and the protection of forested communities. (Amended 2021)

Prescribed Burns:

We support the use of controlled and prescribed burns as management tools where applicable.

We propose that in the interest of economy, and for the betterment of our public lands, that the U.S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management return to a let burn policy on public lands except where human lives, homes, investment or commercial timber is at stake.

Each fire must be prescribed, managed, or controlled based on local economy, resource concerns and potential benefits, and landowner input.

The agency should be able to use the wildfire funds if a burn goes out of control.

We support the addition of legislation that supports a land manager's right to burn, conditional to regulatory requirements.

We support the use of grazing as a fire prevention tool on public lands. (Amended 2021)

Formation of Rangeland Fire Protection Associations:

We support the formation of landowner driven rangeland fire protection association(s) for rural Arizonans and associated training. We further urge the BLM to review and overcome the interagency division between range management and fire staff to further relationships between BLM firefighters, range staff, and ranchers and improve opportunities for fuel management. (2019) (Originated in: Cochise County)

Grazing Permits and Wildfires:

In many instances' wildfires do not burn an entire forest management unit uniformly. We support permit specific analysis for grazing deferment following wildfires.

When a permit is vacant the federal government should be required to maintain the water and fence infrastructure so that in an emergency, such as a fire, the permit can be used for grazing by displaced permittees.

The Four Forest Restoration initiative does not use sound science in its condemnation of grazing as a cause for forest fires. (Amended 2021)

Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund:

We oppose the renewal of the land and water conservation fund. Until the fund is discontinued, we urge congress to appropriate all funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), which receives its monies from off-shore oil royalties, and to divert those funds to individual state foresters for their use in fire suppression, fire management, and conservation efforts instead of using those funds for buying private property. (2018)

Grazing Permits/Public Land Leases:

We oppose any federal buyout program or any permanent retirement of a grazing permit. We consider public land leases and grazing permits to be private property duly worked and paid for. Any law change that would devalue these leases or permits is considered taking of private property.

We recommend that the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and other federal or state agencies be required, when making decisions regarding the administration of grazing permits to:

1. Cooperate in a timely manner with permittees;
2. Use proven and accepted scientific analysis methods;
3. Use prior and concurrent consultations with credible third parties;
4. Evaluate and make decisions on an allotment by allotment basis; and
5. Make specific resource driven recommendations to the Arizona Game and Fish Department regarding game management on the forest.

We support an increase in length of the term of the leases for ranchers on BLM, Forest Service and state lands and contracts that provide greater protection for the ranchers as lessees. Categorical exclusions should be allowed for ordinary grazing permit renewals.

We support S. 1129, the Grazing Improvement Act of 2011. We support the use of current peer reviewed science to help determine the grazing capacity of public land leases. (Amended 2020)

Public Land Improvements:

We support the concept of permittee ownership of improvements on all public lands. If it becomes public policy to remove grazing from public lands, then compensation to lease holders or permittees should cover improvements, including wells, and lease purchase cost. The compensation of lease purchase cost should be based on the value of the lease at the time of purchase or at the time of the public policy change, whichever is highest. (Amended 2020)

Stock Waters:

We support the lessee's right to water developed by the lessee on public lands. We support a rancher's right to the water they own on their property (base waters) and all water they own the rights to on state and federal lands. (Amended 2019)

Range Management Education:

We support requiring any government employee or contract employee assigned to develop or implement regulations that impact livestock grazing management be certified as land management/environmental science professionals, by having formal training and a minimal level of experience in range monitoring and utilization management. (2018)

Public Land Access:

When public access through private property to public land becomes closed, the agency responsible for those public lands shall obtain and maintain an access to that property across public land. (Amended 2020)

Cultural/Archaeological Clearances:

We support efforts to streamline cultural clearance processes for rangeland and conservation improvements. We support the Cultural Resources Programmatic Agreement among the AZ State Land Department, AZ State Forestry, BLM, NRCS, AACD, and SHPO. (2019)

Forest Service Stumpage Fees:

Stumpage fees collected from sales of natural resources from federal lands should be calculated using the resource's market value, not the ultimate price obtained by the federal government. A portion of these funds should be returned to the counties from which the resources were obtained and should be earmarked for public schools and other public functions. Counties should actively pursue these funds and audit their distribution on an annual basis. (2020) (Originated in: Coconino County)

STATE LAND NATURAL RESOURCES

State Trust Land Access Protocol:

We support the protocol developed by Arizona game and fish department and The Arizona State Land Department on responding to locked gate complaints on state trust land. (2020) (Originated in: Cochise County)

Value and Sale of State Trust Lands:

We support the mission of the State Land Department given by the state's Enabling Act and Constitution that requires Trust Land to be managed for the benefit of the Trust and its beneficiaries. We support the mission of State Trust Lands to maximize value and income for the beneficiaries, primarily the common trust, or K-12 education.

Sale of state trust land should be done with full consideration for all economic impacts of the development, such as water supply, roads, schools, and other infrastructure.

The valuation of state land improvements should be based on the current replacement cost upon sale, transfer, condemnation, or reclassification of the state lease land.

We also recognize that in the interest of reform, in order to improve our methods of realizing top value for path-of-progress state lands, the public may also wish some limited set aside of lands from permanent development. We support this concept as long as these lands continue to be available for leases, assuming they have income potential, and as long as current uses may continue.

Distributions from the state trust fund shall not impair the current baseline value of the trust. Enhanced distribution formulas should have limited time periods.

If state land, leased for agriculture other than grazing, is required to go to public auction, there should be no minimum bid requirement.

In the event that state land is being condemned or reclassified with no buyer, the lessee should be compensated by the state land department. The compensation should be based on the valuation of improvements "as if new" and by the valuation definition of replacement cost new. (Amended 2021)

Fence-Out Law:

We support Arizona as an open range state and oppose any changes in the current Arizona fence-out laws. We recommend that the "Subdivision Public Reports" issued by the Arizona Department of Real Estate for distribution to prospective property buyers of property outside of an incorporated area, whether vacant, commercial, or residential land, contain information explaining Arizona fence-out law, the responsibility of the owner to fence their property, and the definition of a legal fence as prescribed by A.R.S. § 3-1426. We support positive disclosure by all real estate sellers in closing escrow acknowledging fence-out law and acceptance by the buyer. We believe the fence-out law does not require the livestock owner to provide an ordinary

duty of care to a motorist or any other persons encountering their livestock. Further, we support legislation to clarify and strengthen fence-out law.

Any governmental agency issuing a permit to develop on or adjacent to grazing land, shall require the developer to maintain the integrity of any existing fences. Any governmental jurisdiction that fails to provide such language in issuing permits to develop such properties, or if the governmental jurisdiction itself destroys the integrity of stated fences, the governmental jurisdiction shall be responsible for any personal injuries or property damages caused by livestock affected by the destruction of said fence integrity. The governmental jurisdiction shall then also be responsible for returning the integrity of the fence. (Amended 2021)

State Land Leases:

We recommend that Arizona continue using the current grazing fee schedule. Due to the increasing incidence of gates left open and cut fences, farmers and ranchers are often faced with serious disruption of their operation and increased expenses. We recommend Arizona strictly enforce its current laws and regulations pertaining to state owned land, destruction of lease improvements, theft, licensing and permitting.

We request that the Arizona Game and Fish Commission, State Land Department, Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service inform other public land users, and the public in general, of the law.

We recommend that there be equal representation of stakeholders on the Governor's State Land Committee.

We support the State Land Department's requirement for new lessees to maintain and continue the intended use of the lease to benefit the trust and long-term stewardship of the land.

We support the lengthening of the term of Arizona state agriculture leases/grazing limits up to 30 years.

We support protecting the improvement investments on lease holds of public and state lands.

We oppose any process which allows the fragmentation or "cherry picking" of state land parcels from within a ranching unit or agricultural lease which would result in a devaluation of the total ranching unit or agriculture operation and the loss of long-term revenue to the state school trust. All leases of state land should provide for their preferential right of renewal, as provided in the Enabling Act, by current lessees, if they are in compliance with the provisions of the lease. Value and stewardship of land assets are enhanced when leaseholders have tenure. We strongly support this concept of stewardship in the leasing of our state lands.

When lawsuits are filed against a permittee and/or the managing land agency, we support a cash bond being provided by the plaintiff equal to the full cash value of the permit to reimburse lessees for loss of production and associated legal costs pertaining to their state land leases.

We strongly recommend that the Arizona State Land Department institute a comprehensive program to evaluate agricultural/grazing leases on a fair and equitable basis for the welfare of both the state and the lessee. The cost of improvements on state leases should be weighed out so that the lessee is acknowledged financially as a major contributing factor toward making the land economically viable.

We support the current Administration and Management Discount Program in place by the Arizona State Land Department that is made available to lessees.

We are opposed to the Arizona State Land Department changing the lease classification without compensating the lessee for improvements. (Amended 2021)

Clean Up Public Lands:

We urge the agencies in charge of public or trust lands to clean up trash dumped on their lands, maintain management policies prohibiting dumping of trash on public lands not designated for trash dumping, and enforce requirements for dispersed camping and recreation permits. Increased enforcement will decrease squatting and associated negative resource impacts. We urge the agencies and local law enforcement to remove any and all illegal inhabitants (“squatters”).

Farm Bureau urges municipalities to provide dumpsters or other large trash receptacles for use by residents, as means to help curb illegal dumping on public lands, farms, or ranch lands. (Amended 2021)

Off-Road Vehicles and Non-Motorized Trails:

Section R12-4-13 of the state regulations on posting and access of state lands paragraph “F,” now reads: “It shall be unlawful to utilize vehicular travel on state lands except: 1. On existing roads, 2. Pick up legally killed big game animals, 3. By lessee and permittee of the State Land Department acting within the limits of their permits and public employees acting in the scope of their duties.”

We recommend that no special permits should be granted for recreational off-road vehicular use without the permission of the lessee involved.

We will seek the support of all parties interested in conservation of our public and private lands to require manufacturers and advertisers of off-road vehicles to provide programs, to educate users about potential damage to the environment and how to minimize such damage.

We recommend land agencies make available to the public a map of specific roads for recreational use.

Non-motorized trails are designed for non-motorized transportation. We oppose the introduction of any motorized vehicle on these trails including but not limited to electric bikes and scooters. (Amended 2021)

Legal Access:

The Arizona Department of Real Estate maintains that for sales purposes legal access to private lands must be by recorded easement or dedication. The Arizona Game and Fish Commission claims that any prior public use of a roadway across private lands constitutes legal access. Clarification of legal access for all purposes is needed to prevent serious trouble between landowners, sportsmen and recreationalists. (2017)

Native Plant Licensing and Removal on State Trust Land:

We support the licensing and tagging of native plants as required by state law.

We oppose extending the licensing and tagging to native plants that have been propagated and grown as nursery stock.

We encourage the Arizona State Land Department to review and adjust its application of the native plant fee structure and its survey requirements for the removal of plants on state trust land. The Arizona State Land Department applies the fees arbitrarily and unfairly to agricultural, mineral exploration and removal, and rights-of-way activities. (Amended 2021)

WILDLIFE

Endangered Species:

We support legislation under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) that would require judicial review to be completed within “190 days” of actual filing of an injunction.

The burden of proof shall be placed on the entity seeking the injunction. Judicial review should only be based on best available science and not on unsubstantiated opinion.

All appeals are subject to the same legislation as the original filing.

Farm Bureau believes funding for Multi Species Conservation Plans (MSCP) should be equitably shared by the water users that have created the habitat problem a MSCP addresses.

Any agency, organization or person petitioning that a listing classification be determined for any species in this state should be required to conduct DNA analysis on the petitioned species, at their cost, to ensure it is a unique, genetically pure species.

The Endangered Species Act should not disrupt historical uses of the land and it should respect a county’s land use plan.

We support updating and modernizing the ESA to include the following major points:

1. All agency actions in the listing process must be judicially reviewable;
2. There must be more realistic timelines for determinations;
3. The scientific data used must be reliable, replicable and verifiable;

4. The ESA must not focus on single species management when that approach is counter to natural processes, making recovery of certain species dependent on killing other species (example: spotted and barred owls);
5. Listing petitions must have scientific integrity to pass the initial review by the agencies;
6. More transparency of listing decision subject matter is necessary;
7. We must replace coercive incentive programs with truly incentive based compensatory programs;
8. The cost of the ESA and its implementation should be borne by the general public and fully accountable on an annual basis;
9. The ESA must recognize that the costs of recovery should be borne by society at large, instead of by the *unlucky* landowner where a species is found;
10. Species which are listed and afforded the protections of the ESA should be limited to those species with a majority range within the borders of the United States. We have no control over management in other countries;
11. Ambiguous and subjective language must be eliminated within the ESA;
12. The term *conservation* is used throughout the ESA and is overly inclusive. It refers to all actions, programs, and efforts towards the wise use of natural resources and should not be used in the context of the ESA; and
13. Decision makers must be allowed to adapt and adjust the management of an ecosystem based upon new information.
14. Critical habitat designations should not be required at the time of listing but left to the discretion of the director during the recovery planning process.

Our efforts must be more focused on those species that are most in danger of extinction due to the direct measurable effects of human activity, and only when the modification of those activities will have a significant measurable effect on species survival. When regulations or legislation regarding rare, threatened or endangered species, or environmental restrictions, alter agricultural practices, agricultural producers should be compensated for the cost of these altered agricultural practices. (Amended 2021)

Mexican Gray Wolf:

We are opposed to any introduction of additional wolf or bear species in Arizona. Anyone importing wolves and bears should be financially responsible for the damage they cause. We believe that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service will not meet the population objectives and recommend that the Mexican gray wolf reintroduction program be abandoned, and all released wolves and all of their pups be captured and removed. Any management program should be administered by the state of Arizona.

In light of budget deficits, livestock depredation and the non-attainment of population objectives, we urge immediate elimination of government funding of the Mexican gray wolf program.

We advocate that an independent study be undertaken by a recognized non-governmental wolf genetics expert to compare DNA from specimens of conserved pelts of Mexican wolves taken around 1900 with DNA of wolves being introduced in the last two decades in Arizona and New Mexico. Such scientific information, providing reliable confirmation of the genetics of the current population, is needed as a basis for informed, scientifically founded public policy initiatives and any proposed wolf recovery program. (Amended 2021)

Mexican Gray Wolf Impact Monetary Compensation:

Agricultural production by livestock owners is seriously harmed by the presence of introduced Mexican wolves.

A professional study completed in the Blue Range Mexican wolf release area prior to wolf introduction determined that the pre-wolf-introduction average annual calf crop was 89%. The professional study determined the average annual calf crop on the same ranches surveyed fell by a minimum of 15% upon wolf introduction.

Wolf presence causes cattle to be nervous, stressed and jumpy with the direct result that:

1. Management of the cattle requires more cowboys to move, work and manage the herd;
2. Wolf-stressed cattle graze less and gain less resulting in lower value at sale.
3. Behavior of stressed cattle results in discounted price by cattle buyers;
4. Affected cows are subject to compromises in their immune systems;
5. Ranch work presents more danger to ranch laborers.

Other economic impacts include:

1. loss of ranch production capacity when a wolf kills a mature breeding cow resulting in the necessity of retaining an additional replacement heifer (one less calf to sell) and a delay of two or three years to produce a calf.
2. Typical Arizona ranches include many thousands of often-rugged acres resulting in the fact that for every wolf depredation that is actually found, the evidence is that seven to eight head of cattle killed by wolves are not found.
3. There are currently onerous costs in time and money to report wolf kills, wait for agency response, and spend what may be hours riding to and from wolf kill sites with federal agents detailed to verify the kill.
4. There are substantial costs and long-term impacts to disruption of carefully designed grazing system patterns resulting from the need to keep moving cattle to unscheduled pastures to try to avoid or minimize wolf attacks.
5. Large veterinary bills incurred when livestock and pets are seriously wounded.
6. Ranch values are adversely impacted from either the actual presence of wolves or the probability of their imminent presence as perceived by potential purchasers of the ranch.

A psychological study has shown that there can be an impact to ranchers from seeing husbanded stock ripped apart and eaten - sometimes while still alive. Additionally, there can be impacts resulting from the concerns for the safety of children and domestic animals important to the ranch operation.

We urge Mexican gray wolf impact compensation programs take into consideration appropriate coverage compensating producers for all impacts resulting from the introduction of Mexican wolves. (Amended 2021)

Sonoran Desert Tortoise:

We strongly recommend that if the Sonoran Desert Tortoise is listed as threatened, that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service include a 4(D) rule that provides exemptions from take, Section 7 & 10 consultation for:

- Normal ranching activities that are implemented with the approved best management practices.
- Conservation practices and other measures that are installed with federal funding that are implemented with the best management practices.

Private, state, or federally funded studies and monitoring of Sonoran Desert Tortoise populations and habitat that were in place prior to listing. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Southwestern Willow Flycatcher:

We support the removal of the Southwestern Willow Flycatcher from the endangered species list. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Critical Habitat Designation:

We oppose the critical habitat designation by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for plant and animal species including, but not limited to, the Zuni Blueheaded Sucker, the New Mexico Meadow Jumping Mouse and the Western Yellow Billed Cuckoo. We oppose critical habitat for the jaguar (*Panthera Onca*).

We believe critical habitat designations should be limited to the historical habitat area of the species based on historical and scientific data. critical habitat must meet designation criteria.

We believe that critical habitat designations are only appropriate when essential for the survival of the species.

We support collaborative conservation efforts to make critical habitat designation unnecessary. (Amended 2020)

Wildlife Management:

We endorse and support those programs of wildlife harvest and population control which experience has proven beneficial to the maintenance of balanced range use by both domestic and wild animals.

We support trapping on public and private lands for wildlife harvesting for fur and meat purposes, as well as population control and animal damage control.

We oppose the passage of any proposition pertaining to Wildlife management that would prohibit the taking of wildlife on public lands.

Excessive populations of wildlife may be destructive to wildlife habitat, cultivated farmland, rangeland and domestic livestock.

We oppose the state wildlife action plan by the Arizona Game and Fish Department. It needs to be rewritten using peer-reviewed science with respect to livestock grazing.

We believe the Arizona Game and Fish Department needs to coordinate hunting seasons to prevent constant, continuous, and conflicting hunts for areas and/or animals.

We oppose wildlife hunting after dark with the exception of species already designated for hunting with a handheld spotlight.

We favor resource-based management of wildlife. Farm and ranch land should be protected through accurate counting and corresponding harvest ratios that effectively manage wildlife.

Depredation hunts should be implemented to maintain proper balance.

We specifically support the right of producers to protect their property from depredation by stock killing predators as administered by the Animal Services Division of the Department of Agriculture and protect private property, crops and pasture, without fear of reprisal from the Game and Fish Department or any other law enforcement agency. The private landowner or the Game and Fish Department should immediately deal with any wildlife exhibiting aggressive behavior and enforce the state livestock killer law, A.R.S. 17-302.

We urge the EPA and the Arizona Game and Fish to allow the use of appropriate predator control devices, including dogs, and toxicant on all lands. We support the continued supervised use of the M44 coyote getter and continued use of the steel trap and leg hold traps as essential tools in predator control. We also support the control of mountain lions, bobcats, and bears with no limitations on method of take.

We recommend that all wildlife and range managers have or gain experience on a working ranch or livestock operation.

We recommend that at least one position within the Arizona Game and Fish Commission should be filled by a person who represents Arizona's range and livestock industry. (Amended 2021)

Wildlife Crop and Rangeland Damage:

We urge the Arizona Game and Fish Commission to stabilize and maintain elk populations at levels compatible with multiple use and sustained yield principles. The program should be acceptable to range resource managers including host federal agencies, the Arizona Land Department and private farmland and rangeland owners. When elk are on private land, the property owner has the right to take action to protect his or her property and interests.

We urge the adoption of legislation enabling aggrieved farmers and ranchers to recover reasonable reparations for damages and providing farmers and ranchers with a means of

requiring the Arizona Game and Fish Commission to take preventative actions, remove offending animals and pay damages.

Uncontrolled populations of predators, certain rodents and birds continue to inflict unnecessary losses on domestic livestock, game animals and agricultural crops. As Arizona is dominated by federal and state land ownership; we urge our elected state and federal representatives to provide state funds and increased federal funding to levels necessary to maintain an effective animal damage control program within the wildlife service's budget under the USDA.

When damage occurs on private land, the state of Arizona should be required to provide the landowner with some type of relief, whether it be landowner tags, or assistance in efforts to deter animals. (Amended 2021)

Food Safety Depredation Hunts:

The Arizona Game and Fish Department should work with local stakeholders to enact depredation hunts that address food safety concerns for crops and/or livestock grown or raised adjacent to wildlife habitat. (Adopted 2019) (Originated in: Yuma County)

Hunting Blinds on Stock Ponds:

The laws prohibiting camping within one-fourth mile of a livestock watering location (A.R.S. § 17-308) should be applied to hunting blinds setup on waters, which inhibit both wildlife and livestock from access to available water. We also encourage Arizona Game and Fish to provide warning signs for placement at watering locations to alert hunters as to the applicable rules. We encourage the Arizona Game and Fish to focus on this issue during hunter education and public events. (2018)

Ranching for Wildlife:

We support the development of a system in Arizona to allow ranchers to sell hunting permits on private and permitted land. We support the establishment of an advisory board to administer the program. The board should include representatives of the Arizona Cattle Growers Association, the Arizona Farm Bureau, the Arizona Wool Producers Association, the Arizona Game and Fish Commission, the Arizona wildlife groups, State and County Health Services, and Animal Depredation Control Board. We direct Arizona farm bureau to pursue ranching for wildlife legislation. (Amended 2020)

Hunting Within City Limits:

We oppose any additional restrictions being placed on hunting or taking of wildlife on private lands within city or municipal boundaries, given existing laws ARS 13-3107 (1/4 mile) and ARS 17-312 (reckless discharge of a firearm). (2017)

Wildlife Grazing Fee:

The Arizona Department of Game and Fish should pay trespass fees to the federal or state land permittee if grazing allotment numbers are reduced because of excessive population of wildlife on federal or state trust land. (Amended 2021)

Wildlife Pest and Predator Control:

We oppose the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearm and Explosives regulating explosive pest control devices (EPCDs) under federal explosive laws that require individual permitting and qualified storage facilities for the use of such devices. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Feral Swine:

We support the eradication of feral, abandoned, or unauthorized swine throughout the state. We oppose the importation and transportation for purposes of release. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Prairie Dogs:

Prairie dogs are a nuisance statewide and are causing serious deterioration of farm and rangeland and are a danger to horses and their riders. Prairie dogs are also a potential carrier of deadly diseases. We call on the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to help in the control of these pests. We should negotiate with these agencies to cooperate with the Board of Supervisors in each affected county to develop a plan and equip personnel to carry out a prairie dog control program. (2018)

WATER

Water Rights:

We believe water rights are inviolate. We believe that a water right is a property right belonging to the land that may not be taken for another use without proper compensation. We believe all water rights must be based on historical and/or continued use.

We believe any statewide water plan should be designed to support increasing city populations in the Active Management Areas (AMAs) while maintaining a significant agricultural industry in Arizona. Such a plan would maximize the amount of water available in the state.

We believe Arizona should adopt a water policy which encourages the effective utilization of all water resources and which encourages all water users to conserve as much water as economically feasible. Incentives should be developed to encourage use of reclaimed water (effluent) by agriculture. Conservation of water should not adversely affect the owner's water rights.

The current laws and regulations of Arizona intend to foster safe yield, but in effect, they will increase total water use. We support the concept of converting water rights, as opposed to creating new water rights that compete with existing uses. Furthermore, water sufficiency decisions for new demands should be made at the state level by the Arizona Department of Water Resources.

Arizona Farm Bureau supports laws, rules, and regulations that encourage new residential and commercial development either:

1. To occur on lands historically using water, or
2. To directly use renewable water supplies rather than groundwater. (Amended 2020)

Department of Water Resources:

Because regulation of water was established to benefit the general public, the Arizona Legislature should make more funding available for the department from the general fund. Operating the department solely from fees puts an unfair burden on regulated entities, including agriculture.

The Department of Water Resources shall respond in a timely manner when acting upon applications for permits, certificates, other documents and upon application for a finding, determination or approval required by the Groundwater Act. (Amended 2020)

Surface Water Entitlement:

We recognize that the agricultural areas along the Colorado River are uniquely situated to take full advantage of that river, and that the farmers in those areas have established irrigation districts with historic allocations of Colorado River water, and have perfected those water rights through decades of toil and hardships working their land. We realize also that any movement of this Colorado River water outside of those counties bordering the river could only be at a cost that would make such water prohibitively expensive for any kind of agricultural activity. As such, and as those Colorado River allocations are a crucial natural resource to western Arizona's municipal and industrial users as well as to agricultural interest, and as the agricultural production in western Arizona is increasingly valuable to all people throughout the entire state as well as the nation, we are opposed to the sale and/or transfer of Colorado River water entitlement in western Arizona outside of the irrigation districts to which those entitlements belong, or are contracted with the United States government.

We recognize that the agricultural areas along the Gila River have also perfected their water rights through decades of toil, decrees, litigation and hardships working their land. We realize that any movement of the Gila River water outside decreed areas or taking water rights away to give to someone else inside the decreed areas would make farming prohibitive. This would have a detrimental effect on economics in those areas. We should work toward protecting these rights. Agriculture's use of water should be maintained as number one priority for Coolidge Dam.

Water rights for irrigation should take precedence over water claims for maintenance of riparian areas or for the benefit of endangered or threatened species. (Amended 2019)

Affirmation of States Water Rights:

We oppose use of the Endangered Species Act, Wilderness Act, Clean Water Act (CWA) and/or any other federal laws by federal agencies to usurp, seize, restrict, impede or take state-distributed, granted, assigned or treaty water rights owned by individuals, partnerships, corporations or municipalities.

Any rule defining what constitutes waters of the United States (WOTUS) should adhere to the following principles:

- Focus on water features that are likely to directly affect traditional navigable waters and that are identifiable based on clear, objective, broadly understood and accepted characteristics, to provide clarity and certainty to regulators and the public.
- A water feature that is “relatively permanent” must contain water persistently and frequently. At a minimum, it must continuously and regularly (not exceptionally) carry water on a multi-month seasonal basis (such as throughout the spring season). Features that are usually dry and only carry water when it rains are not “relatively permanent,” but ephemeral and definitely not navigable.
- Regulating wetlands should only be considered if they are adjacent to traditional navigable waters and their tributaries, meaning they directly touch or share a common border with those waters.
- The CWA agricultural exclusions and exemptions should apply to state water regulations and include additional exclusions for features such as stock ponds, ditches, or irrigation structures.

If the State of Arizona regulates additional waters not already covered by the federal CWA, state regulations must adhere to the same principles outlined above.

When a private or municipal water right is located on federal or state land, that right must be deemed to include the holder’s right of access to the source of the water and to any element of the distribution system necessary for delivery including wells, springs, streams, rivers, stock ponds, agricultural ditches, U.S. canals, pipes, and other conveyance mechanisms for maintenance purposes because denial of such access effectively constitutes an illegal, de facto, taking of the water right.

Congressional legislation is needed to guarantee Arizona’s premier authority to issue and protect water rights within the state. We oppose any attempt by federal agencies to gain jurisdiction over state waters in a manner inconsistent with established state water law. Additionally, legislation is needed to clarify that the right of access as described above is inherent in state-issued water rights owned by individuals, partnerships, corporations and/or municipalities on federally managed land. (Amended 2021)

Water Rights for Protected Agricultural Land:

Pursuant to the expressed public policies and applying only to specified acreage of irrigated agricultural land recognized as being uniquely qualified for protection from development and for preservation as irrigated agriculture, we recommend that when such agricultural land is subject to a purchase of development rights contract or a conservation easement, then State Water Law (title 45) shall recognize the corresponding necessity and right of applying a sufficient and secure supply of irrigation water to sustain a viable agricultural operation, not to exceed the original water duty.

In advance of signing on to such special designation and forfeiture of development rights, farmers and ranchers must be able to apply to the Arizona Department of Water Resources for a determination, including the specified acreage and annual water right, according to which a new certificate of grandfathered groundwater right will be issued when the protected status has been accepted and is formally complete. (Amended 2019)

General Adjudication:

We should become involved in the adjudication of state waters. This process vitally affects agriculture in nearly every area of the state. Because the Arizona State Legislature has become involved in the adjudication process, we should play a major role in the development of legislation and in the legal process. Protecting the existing rights of users is a primary concern.

We support a legislative remedy to those groundwater users that are negatively affected by subflow being considered surface water.

We support historical irrigation wells within any subflow zone which may be determined in the future. We support the right to claim for beneficial use that water as surface water with a priority date from either the date a well was registered with the state of Arizona or the date it was put to use. (Amended 2020)

Native American Water Settlements:

We support the prompt settlement of all Native American water claims. Any settlements would be final. Arizona citizens should not be required to fulfill a federal commitment. We support resolving Native American water claims through negotiated water settlements. Native American water settlements should have the participation of all parties with interests in the affected water. In case of potential conflicting claims, the Arizona surface water general adjudication process should be allowed to settle those conflicts. Claims should not be settled with groundwater, and any surface water should be acquired from willing sellers without the federal government bearing the costs. The settlements shall consider historic water use decrees. The settlements must contain language to protect the water rights of the communities affected.

The federal government should bear all the monetary costs of both parties of any settlement and/or litigation.

Water allocated to Native American reservations should not be sold interstate. We do, however, support the right of Native Americans to use allocated water as they see fit within their respective reservations even though they may have multi-state boundaries. The Gila River Indian Settlement and its authorizing legislation is intended to settle all claims to the Gila River in Arizona. The current settlement excludes claims at or downstream from the diversions into the Gila Bend Canal and the Enterprise Canal. These claims should be quantified and made a part of the settlement. (Amended 2020)

Groundwater:

We support the use of groundwater on agricultural lands. We support grandfathered irrigation rights on lands with historic water use, including those within an AMA. We believe that use of this water is an inherent property right attached to the land.

Groundwater should maintain its separate identity, whether used alone or in combination with another water resource. The groundwater withdrawal fee should be removed from lands used for agricultural purposes. (Amended 2019)

Surface Waters:

We oppose efforts by the legislature and the Department of Water Resources to obtain control over the use of surface water by regulation.

We support the use of surface water resources whenever it is economically available, in lieu of the use of groundwater.

We support use of surface water supplies within irrigation districts to the limit of its economically feasible availability.

As an incentive to agricultural use, the use of surface water that is not co-mingled should not be included in the Arizona Department of Water Resources calculations of water duty allotments. (Amended 2021)

Weather Management:

We support research in Arizona to explore the feasibility of supplementing natural precipitation in order to stabilize and improve surface water supplies for all Arizona water users. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Water Retention Structures:

We support the construction of water retention structures in the upper Gila River water shed. These structures will increase recreational opportunities, increase water quality, reduce damage from large storms, floods, and other natural disasters, as well as improved distribution to agricultural stakeholders. (Amended 2019)

ACTIVE MANAGEMENT AND IRRIGATION NON-EXPANSION AREAS**Groundwater Management Areas:**

The establishment of new AMA's or INA's should require the support of the majority of the affected parties.

We support the continued use of the best management practices alternative conservation plan, as part of a workable, economically, and environmentally sound plan for agricultural water management and conservation. A program such as this provides for viability in agriculture and allows for the orderly transformation of agriculture in the active management areas.

State law should reflect policy that ensures value to land with a historic water use. This will encourage the conversion of farmland within AMA's to urban use, rather than converting desert lands with no historic water use. This method of water management is the most practical approach to maintaining balanced water use within AMA's.

We believe the cost of operating an active management area (AMA) is too high. We urge the department of water resources to improve and streamline the management of an active management area to substantially reduce costs.

Conversion of irrigation grandfathered rights to Type I rights should continue to be allowed beyond the year 2025 in active management areas as an incentive for urbanization of lands with historic water use. Conversion rights should be restored to prior irrigated lands to promote development on lands with water rights (ground or surface water rights) rather than lands with no history of prior water use.

No area may be declared an AMA or an irrigation non-expansion area (INA) without conclusive evidence of significant decline in the water table and a vote of those within the area to be designated. We request two options for the creation of an INA: (1) by order of the director or (2) by petition and election on an acreage basis. (Amended 2020)

Type I Right:

If a city or municipality leases water rights for municipal use, upon termination of the lease, the city or the municipality would lose the right to continue the use of the water and no new water right could be established and the area served with the leased water shall not be considered a service area. As cities expand into agricultural areas and provide for their water needs by securing groundwater through the drilling of new wells, the cities should be required to post bond to cover compensation for any damages to the existing wells in the area due to salt intrusion or lowering of water tables. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Municipal Water Transfers:

It is poor public policy for municipalities to purchase remote land for the associated water right with the intent of transferring this water. This practice results in severe economic hardships for affected rural areas. This is particularly true where municipalities have not implemented effective conservation planning techniques and strategies regarding groundwater, renewable water and water that could be captured and stored. Cities should not be able to import remote non-recharging water if the cities purchasing these remote waters have not reached conservation goals. In no event should a water transfer under a Type II right exceed 50% of water allocated under such right.

No water should be transferred outside of Arizona. All Arizona water shall be used within the borders of Arizona, regardless of ownership. (Amended 2021)

Brackish Water:

The taking of brackish water for urban use outside of a groundwater basin that is already using the brackish water for agricultural purposes should be prohibited, except in Yuma county. (2019)

Groundwater Withdrawal Fees:

Legislation should be supported that allows an AMA to charge up to \$2.50 per acre foot of water withdrawn for water banking. (2018)

WATER SUPPLY

Augmenting Arizona Water Supplies:

With rapid population growth across the state, Arizona will need additional water supplies. The state needs a statewide coordinated effort to augment water supplies, e.g.: building water storage

facilities, watershed management, desalination plants, conservation, and rainfall harvest, rather than creating competition between urban and rural areas for available water. Any efforts to develop additional supplies should not negatively impact existing users.

We support adequate funds to the Arizona Department of Water Resources and rural Arizona for hydrological research to augment water.

We support advocating for alternate water sources via flood water harvesting. (Amended 2020)

Reclaimed Water (Municipal Effluent):

We support the expanded use of reclaimed water (municipal effluent) by agriculture as a supplement to or replacement for other water resources and the coordination of water quality regulations to facilitate delivery and use of reclaimed water for agriculture. We support the development of partnerships between municipalities and agricultural water users to fully utilize reclaimed water supplies. We also support research on uses of reclaimed water.

As an incentive to agricultural users, use of reclaimed water should not be included in the Arizona Department of Water Resources calculations of water duty allotments. (2019)

Indirect Recharge:

Agriculture's contribution to replenishing the aquifer through indirect recharge should be fully recognized. Calculations of indirect recharge from land in agricultural production should be included in Arizona water budgets. (2019)

Recharge:

We support recharging groundwater aquifers with renewable water resources when such resources are surplus to direct beneficial uses. The capture and recharge of urban runoff can infringe on existing rights. Urban recharge should not be credited to the urban community if runoff from the same areas contributes to surface water supplies of the downstream right holders historically.

Agricultural lands with irrigation grandfathered rights and agriculture-related industries using Type I, Type II or general industrial use permits must remain exempt from any state requirement to replenish mined groundwater. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Industrial Water Permits for Agriculture:

Renewal of industrial water permits for agricultural operations should be determined solely by the Arizona Department of Water Resources, regardless of the operation's geographic location in relation to a commercial or municipal water provider. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Central Arizona Project:

We support the efforts of the Central Arizona Water Conservation District (CAWCD) to provide the lowest possible water rates, consistent with sound business practices.

We recommend that Central Arizona Water Conservation District develop and use its G.S.F. indirect underground storage and recovery program.

If the Central Arizona Project water is used to fill the water requirement of tribal claims, the non-Native American agriculture customers should receive compensation and/or other benefits for their loss. At a minimum, non-Native American irrigation districts should retain access to enough water to allow them to reasonably retire their distribution system debts. Any water allocated to Native American water rights should be used only within Arizona.

We support the elements of the Arizona Water Banking Authority.

We are opposed to giving CAP sovereign immunity. (Amended 2021)

Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District (CAGRD):

We support maintaining the current management of CAGRD. (2019) (Originated in: Maricopa County)

Utilization of Colorado River Allocation:

We recognize the importance of the Central Arizona Project (CAP), in its current priority number 4 status, to the state and encourage full utilization of Arizona's total Colorado River allocation.

Agriculture is currently the primary sector protecting Arizona's allotment of water from the Colorado River through the CAP. Available CAP water should continue to be available for agricultural use at a cost that provides an economic incentive to users to forego the use of groundwater. Agriculture's continued use of significant quantities of Arizona's Colorado River allocation is the best protection of this right for future use by all Arizonans.

In the event that municipal or other users of CAP water do not utilize their full allocation after the year 2023, any excess CAP water should continue to be made available to agricultural users under the current preferential pricing and contract terms.

We support acquisition and recharge of renewable water resources (i.e. CAP water) as a further protection of Arizona's Colorado River allocation.

We support legislation to encourage the early and complete use of all Central Arizona Project water supplies through indirect recharge of Central Arizona Project waters on agricultural lands and by such other means as are feasible which do not interfere with agricultural use of Central Arizona Project water.

We support the federal funding and operation of the Yuma desalting plant. This is necessary to provide relief to local valleys from the high groundwater conditions that exist, while still meeting the Mexican treaty obligations concerning salinity. The treated water from the Yuma desalting plant could then be used in place of water released from Lake Mead to alleviate structural deficit losses on the Colorado River.

We oppose the transfer of on-river Colorado River entitlements of water used for agriculture to off-river municipalities. (Amended 2021)

Forbearance:

We support CAP's current forbearance authority within the boundaries of the Central Arizona Project delivery system consistent with existing contracts and court rulings. Agriculture would be willing to support any ADWR/CAWCD joint agreement on the issue of forbearance, provided CAP's water delivery contracts with CAP irrigation districts are honored.

Any forbearance program must include a fair and objective definition of historical water use. Because each individual contractor's historic use is a fact-specific question, historic use should be considered by examining the contractor's normal water use over a period of several years, taking into account market forces that may account for variations in use. After considering these factors, only an actual reduction in beneficial consumptive use should be considered a reduction that qualifies as intentionally created surplus, or to have the conserved water eligible for compensated system conservation. (Adopted 2019) (Originated in: Maricopa County)

Flood Control and Dam Safety:

There should be an increased effort to catch floodwaters that would normally go to waste as one way to increase Arizona's water supply. We should promote the education of various state and federal agencies, and private groups, as to the benefits of flood control projects.

Arizona needs to make a statewide commitment to build flood control structures with water storage capability. This is especially important for major impoundments of water, but also includes diversion dikes and river channelization.

Arizona needs to build flood control projects on the Gila River and its tributaries wherever necessary. We believe scouring and channelization to be the most environmentally sound and economically feasible solution to the flooding along the lower Gila River. This includes the flood control structures of Camelback and Conners Dam on the upper Gila River, and Quail Springs Dam on the San Francisco River, the channelization of the Gila River wherever necessary from the New Mexico state line to the Colorado River. We support the channelization of the Gila River from Painted Rock Dam to the Colorado River to carry up to 25,000 cubic feet per second in-flows.

Arizona needs to maintain a channel for the Salt/Gila Rivers from Granite Reef Dam to Painted Rock Dam for: flood control, aquifer recharge, and water conservation by reducing and controlling water consumptive plants along and within the channel.

We are opposed to the absolute authority of the Dam Safety Division of the Arizona Department of Water Resources to condemn and breach dams declared unsafe on the hypothetical theory of a one hundred year flood without due consideration of public opinion and past history of the communities affected.

Any new wilderness area designations should include adequate flood control measures to protect downstream areas. (Amended 2021)

Lake Powell:

Lake Powell provides much needed electricity, irrigation and municipal water and recreation. Therefore, we oppose any plan to drain Lake Powell. We oppose releases of Lake Powell that are not in accord with the US Bureau of Reclamation's Lake Powell/Lake Mead equalization guidelines. We also oppose any surge releases from Lake Powell. (Amended 2019)

Man-Made Lakes and Reservoirs:

We oppose any plan to drain or change the designation or scope of man-made lakes or reservoirs that provide much needed electricity, irrigation and municipal water.

We oppose releases of water that are not in accord with water demands, hydroelectric power generation and/or flood control criteria. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Upper Gila Water Issues:

We support the efforts to settle the Upper Gila River through the use of a resolution task force committee comprised of individuals that belong to the Gila Valley Irrigation District, The Franklin Irrigation District and tribal leaders.

In the settlement, if the action of the federal government through the taking of water rights from the Upper Gila users occurs, the federal government must compensate those affected parties and buy the land and businesses according to the takings clause of the U.S. Constitution.

We support the construction of water retention structures in the Upper Gila River water shed. These structures will increase recreational opportunities, increase water quality, reduce damage from large storms, floods, and other natural disasters, as well as improved distribution to agricultural stakeholders. (Amended 2021)

Development of Harquahala Water Basin:

We support the Harquahala Water Basin being developed by private entities to develop and deliver groundwater, which could then be purchased by municipalities, consistent with Arizona law. (2020) (Originated in: Yuma County)

WATER CONSERVATION

Water Conservation Efforts:

We believe that the positive effects produced by water conservation efforts should be encouraged without reducing the water entitlement of the conserving district, area, or farm. If, however, an agricultural operation's water entitlement or use is reduced by a mandatory curtailment, then urban water entitlement and use should be subject to the same mandatory curtailment.

Arizona and its various agencies should be required to adopt landscape designs to conform with its distinctive arid climate.

Current technology should be developed and implemented regarding water conservation techniques and strategies. Educational programming to water users should be accelerated regarding available water conservation technology. (2018)

Riparian Areas:

In establishing riparian areas, existing surface water rights and groundwater usage must be protected; private property must be protected when access is sought to these designated riparian areas; the designation must not hamper the multiple use of the riparian area; and the designation must not damage the use of adjoining land or its value.

The definition of a riparian area should be based upon meeting all requirements for consecutive days of surface saturation, hydric soils and the presence of a majority of wetland plants. A riparian area, even though it may meet all three criteria, may only be designated after a request for designation has been made by a state agency or interested parties. The definition of riparian should clearly state that all man-made water retention ponds, lakes and/or pump back systems are not considered riparian.

Local jurisdictions should be allowed to challenge riparian designation on public lands based upon a cost benefit analysis and the maintenance of the land's multiple use.

The establishment of a riparian area shall not restrict flood control structures or public health control measures from being developed to protect private and public property, and public health and safety. One state agency shall be responsible for designating riparian areas. If a dispute arises regarding a riparian area, arbitration of state and federal agencies should be required in a timely fashion.

We strongly believe private landowners forced to provide certain riparian habitat, aesthetic views, wetlands, critical habitat and other costly management procedures on entities/ lands near federal or state lands should either have that land purchased at fair market value by the agency requiring the restriction or be quickly and fully compensated for all expenses and/or loss of the use of said land, whichever the private landowner prefers.

We support the use of riparian areas for grazing as a management tool. (Amended 2021)

Livestock Grazing for Salt Cedars Control in Riparian Areas:

We support livestock grazing as a first method for controlling Salt Cedar growth in riparian areas. (Adopted 2021) (Originated in: Graham County)

Navigable Stream Designation:

Navigable stream designations should be limited to those streams with characteristics of a watercourse, which would have enabled Arizona to claim title to them as a result of their admission into the union. It shall clearly state that streams that only flow intermittently or during flooding are not navigable. (2020)

Wild and Scenic Rivers:

We support efforts to preserve in a natural state those unique and pristine areas showing no appreciable evidence of use by modern man as currently designated.

We are opposed to any further designation of wild and scenic rivers.

We support a timeline with a defined period of 5 years for a group to prove that a river meets all “wild and scenic” qualifications as defined in the Act. Any submitted areas that do not meet the qualifications as defined will no longer be considered or managed as “wild and scenic” at the end of the 5-year period. During the consideration period the submitted area will not be required to be managed as “wild and scenic”.

We oppose limitations and bans on livestock grazing along southwestern rivers, to include the Verde and Gila. Science points to a loss of habitat for native species through these bans, as well as economic loss for individuals and local areas. Also, independent of the studies showing that the “grazing bans” are harmful to the native endangered and threatened species, we stand in opposition to the lack of performance of NEPA analysis for this major federal action on part of the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Any further consideration of lands as wild and scenic rivers in Arizona should emphasize a requirement that there be no adverse economic impacts upon agriculture. (Amended 2021)

Water Measuring Devices:

We oppose new groundwater metering requirements. It is the right and sole responsibility of the water owner to keep their registrations current at the Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR). This information is private in nature and should be maintained as private.

Furthermore, we oppose any attempts by national, state, or local governments as well as private individuals or corporations to meter domestic, irrigation, or rural wells. Where groundwater metering is required, no other data can be gathered.

While we do not support mandated water monitoring systems, if legislation or regulation requires such devices, we support legislation that provides tax credits for the registration of water rights and for the cost, installation and maintenance of water measuring devices as mandated by Arizona’s Groundwater Code. We urge all methods of alternative measuring devices be given consideration including the use of weirs and power usage. (Amended 2020)

Urban Conservation:

In an effort to conserve water and protect the environment, we urge all governmental bodies to reevaluate their landscaping requirements. Excessive landscaping requirements result in wasted water and disposal problems for plant clippings. (2018)

Water Conservation Programs:

Any conservation program for agriculture must be economically, agronomically and technically feasible and reflect differences in farming conditions and cropping patterns.

Alternative conservation programs for agriculture must allow growers the flexibility to take advantage of economic opportunities that present themselves and use water in as efficient a manner as economically practicable for those crops. Conservation programs must not preclude a farmer’s response to future market opportunities. A Best Management Practices program would meet these needs.

We believe equivalency in conservation programs means that production agriculture in the future will use no more water in an AMA than production agriculture uses currently in that AMA (due to declining acreage in production as land is retired for development).

Flex credits belong to the owner of the property on which the credits were earned. Flex credit transfers should be allowed to occur during the second calendar year following the year for which the credit was registered, so that the farmers know the availability of credits before entering the growing season and should be marketable within the same sub-basin. (Amended 2021)

DROUGHT

Water Conservation During Drought:

Farm Bureau supports current conservation requirements under state law. The Bureau of Reclamation should impose no further rules regarding agricultural use of water.

Farm Bureau believes that the Arizona Department of Water Resources and Governor's office should continue to declare drought conditions in Arizona as long as the Colorado, Salt, Gila or Verde River system reservoirs remain below 65% of capacity. A drought designation allows the applicability of the reclamation states emergency drought relief act for agricultural water use. (Amended 2020)

Fallowing Land During Drought:

Fallowing of farmland has been identified as a potential strategy to mitigate the impacts of severe drought. Any discussions regarding the implementation of a farmland-fallowing program must include the following concepts:

1. Individual grower participation in the program is voluntary;
2. Fallowing agreements should be at the irrigation district level and district members should have an equal opportunity to participate;
3. Agreements will be short-term;
4. Compensation should go to the grower/farm operator;
5. Compensation for fallowing should recognize district operating and maintenance costs and third-party impacts;
6. Include provisions for compliance with particulate matter and noxious weed control; and
7. Allow farm operators to remain eligible for government farm programs and conservation contracts.

We support greater education efforts concerning the full economic impacts on the fallowing of farmland. (2017)

Drought Contingency Plan:

We will support a Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) type program so long as it includes meaningful mitigation for the loss of 2004 Ag Water Settlement designated CAP Ag Pool Supplies.

Mitigation should include alternative surface water supplies to be made available to the CAP irrigation districts in amounts equivalent to what they would receive without DCP under the 2007 federal guidelines for operating the Colorado River. Surface water supplies may include existing CAP stored water and higher-priority CAP water allocations of cities and tribes.

When the Secretary of Interior declares a shortage in the lower Colorado River Basin, we believe in most cases it is poor public policy to allow CAP water storage to continue in underground storage facilities when there is availability for storage in groundwater savings facilities which provide water for agricultural use and positive economic activity. (2019) (Originated in: Maricopa County and Pinal County)

WATER QUALITY

Water Quality:

Arizona water should be protected to a level consistent with its intended use. Water quality standards, and the enforcement of those standards, should not hamper normal agricultural operations. All irrigation canals and water for livestock use, including stock ponds and reclaimed water, should be exempt from state water quality standards designed for other intended uses.

We support the Department of Environmental Quality's non-point source committees that give local control over local problems.

In order to make informed decisions on reducing agricultural contributions to groundwater and surface water pollution, the following should be established:

1. How much agriculture contributes to non-point pollution;
2. How various management practices influence pollution levels; and
3. How much of the pollutant may be naturally occurring.

When applying water pollution laws to agriculture, consideration must be given to the following:

1. Apply regulation to only those areas where there is scientific evidence of an identifiable problem;
2. Include all potential polluters: cities, parks, homeowners, golf courses, natural and industrial sources;
3. Develop solutions that are economically and technically feasible and administered with flexibility;
4. Provide a means of negotiated settlement for first time offenders found out of compliance;
5. The burden of proof must rest on the regulatory agencies involved;
6. Minimize paperwork and record keeping; and
7. Allow for an informal hearing prior to initiating enforcement action.

Best Management Practices (BMPs), to control nitrogen pollution, are to be a set of guidelines for farmers and ranchers, not rules. The compliance scheme shall emphasize education rather than penalties.

We support voluntary implementation of Best Management Practices regarding nutrient management.

Groundwater quality regulations should be based on health standards and peer reviewed sound science.

This research is essential to avoid imposition of strict regulations that are costly to farmers without solving pollution problems.

Agriculturalists should not be held liable for past or current practices and application of chemicals that were or are done in accordance with federal, state and local statutes or standard agricultural practices. (Amended 2021)

Impaired Water:

If a water source is assessed as impaired by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality or the Environmental Protection Agency, the assessing agency should also be required to determine the source of the cause of impairment. (2018)

Small Ag Systems:

We support water testing exemption for small agricultural operations of 25 persons or fewer. Farmers should be exempt from testing water monthly as required of public water systems. (2017)

Clean Water Act - Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations:

Any new rules, regulations or new enforcement of the Clean Water Act (CWA) as applied to concentrated animal feeding operations must take into consideration the unique climate and topographical conditions of Arizona, rather than apply those designed for other regions where the risk of groundwater nitrate contamination is more acute.

Any new rules, regulations or new enforcement of the CWA must preserve the 25-year 24-hour storm permit exemption.

Any new rules, regulations or new enforcement of the CWA must not extend point source regulations to non-point sources such as farm and ranch fields and pastures as that would exceed the authority granted by congress in the CWA.

Individual states should retain control of implementation of Clean Water Act regulations and compliance monitoring. Enforcement actions should be triggered only by an actual illegal discharge into the waters of the United States.

The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) should provide training and certification for CAFO operators to meet Clean Water Act permit requirements.

NRCS should prioritize the funding of the animal agriculture share of the environmental quality incentives program (EQIP) among CAFO operations that need assistance to meet pollution prevention requirements. NRCS should also provide training and/or certification to third party

vendors to assist CAFO operators in complying with CAFO regulations in the development of comprehensive nutrient management plans (CNMP) and facility design. EQIP funding should be made available to pay third-party vendors for CNMP and CAFO facility design and engineering.

The owner(s) of a CAFO should not be considered liable by any government agency for later actions of a person who assumes ownership of manure generated by the CAFO. (Amended 2021)

AIR QUALITY

Air Pollution Controls:

We are in favor of having normal agricultural practices exempt from air pollution controls; including, but not limited to, livestock facilities (including equine facilities), open controlled agricultural burning, and ditch burning and normal field operations.

We request a fair and justifiable definition of “offensive odors” in Arizona air quality control legislation.

Any existing gin operating 90 days or less should not be required to install expensive equipment to decrease dust. All out-of-state commercial vehicles engaged in intrastate activity in Arizona should meet our air pollution rules.

We oppose the inclusion of livestock operations, including confined animal feeding operations, in the Arizona Department of Environmental quality’s pollution prevention program (P2) or the Environmental Protection Agency’s Clean Air Act regulations.

We oppose mandatory manure removal requirements for all agricultural operations. We support on-site manure management remaining an acceptable strategy and it should remain a voluntary option. (Amended 2020)

Methane Emissions:

We oppose any attempt to regulate methane emissions from ruminant animals under the Clean Air Act or any other legislative vehicle. (2017)

Particulate Air Pollution:

We support the rule drafted by the governor-appointed Best Management Practices (BMP’s) Committee, which creates a menu of best management practices for reduction of particulate matter.

We encourage state governmental entities to challenge the Environmental Protection Agency mandates on dust that are not supported by peer reviewed sound science.

Best Management Practices should be tailored to each specific Non-attainment area and account for geographical differences. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Air Quality:

Any air quality regulations should be drafted based on local geographical weather and soil conditions and must be based on sound scientific facts. We oppose air quality monitoring by both manned and unmanned aerial crafts. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Air Inspector Education:

We support agriculture air inspector training administered by a partnership of the Arizona Department of Agriculture and the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality for air inspectors (city, county, and state) for standardization of inspection and interpretation of regulations as it relates to AG BMP rules.

Regulation guidance should include photo examples to ensure inspectors are consistent in their enforcement process. Additionally, there should be continuity in jurisdictional rules (city, county and state). (Adopted 2019) (Originated in: Maricopa County)

Air and Water Quality Regulations Consolidation:

Within ADEQ, we propose consolidation of air and water quality regulatory actions for agriculture within a specific jurisdiction having specialized agricultural expertise. (Amended 2021)

ENERGY

Ag Preference Power:

The first priority for allocation of power from the Arizona Power Authority should be limited solely to irrigation, electrical and water delivery districts.

We support power company pricing structures that offer load management discounts for agricultural producers.

We support the Irrigation and Electrical Districts Association of Arizona (IEDA) in their endeavors to maintain ARS Title 30, authorizing the Arizona Power Authority as it is currently written. We also support IEDA in maintaining the current eligibility requirements for participation under State Water Power Plan ARS Title 45.

Additionally, we support IEDA's efforts to ensure that conservation measures required of the districts are reasonable and that all conservation alternatives, including demand-side management, are available to them.

Hydropower generated at the Hoover and Glen Canyon Dams is vitally important to the state of Arizona and Arizona agriculture. We applaud the three-state effort among Arizona, Nevada and California in passing the Hoover Power Allocation Act of 2011, which ensures the continued availability of Hoover Power for existing power customers and to provide power for new allottees through 2067. (Amended 2020)

Western Area Power Administration:

We believe that mandatory contractor advance funding should not be allowed to replace voluntary advance funding in the General Power Contract Provisions (GPCP) nor should the

Western Area Power Administration administrator be given absolute discretionary authority to change power and energy allocations in contracts held by its irrigation and electrical district customers. If these types of provisions were adopted, the power purchase contracts we rely on through our irrigation and electrical districts will be contracts in title only. Production agriculture in several western states would be seriously threatened by the new uncertainty of affordable power.

Existing WAPA customers should not be burdened with the cost of integrating variable energy (renewable) resources into the Western grid. We support the concept of “beneficiary pay” regarding the integration of new, non-federal generation.

A WAPA decision to enter a regional sub-hourly energy market, otherwise known as an energy imbalance market (EIM), has economic consequences for irrigation and electrical districts served by WAPA. Any decision by WAPA to join a market, or not, should be based on the following principles:

1. Participation is consistent with statutory, regulatory, and contractual obligations.
2. Maintain reliable (and cost effective) delivery of power and transmission to all customers.
3. Resource participation in an EIM (or other centralized market model) is voluntary.
4. A decision to participate (or not) in an EIM will be based on a sound business rationale. (Amended 2020)

Coal Energy:

We oppose government regulations that result in the closure of coal mines. (Amended 2020)

District Voting Policy:

We support legislation that amends A.R.S. allowing irrigation and electrical districts to adopt an acreage system of voting. (2017)

Energy Sources:

We encourage alternative energy sources that are economically viable, including those that utilize agricultural products and by-products.

Farmers and ranchers should take an active role in understanding and utilizing renewable energy sources. We support and encourage the use of tax incentives to promote and develop the utilization of renewable energy on agricultural operations.

Any provision of law requiring a renewable energy portfolio shall give full credit for existing as well as future hydroelectric generation.

Because some types of energy development require larger quantities of natural resources than others, we recommend the amount of natural resources used should be carefully considered before recommending development of a particular energy resource. Federal policies should pursue sources other than natural gas for energy sources.

Local, State and Federal governments should encourage the construction of nuclear power plants. We oppose any attempt by the Arizona Corporation Commission to mandate use of any particular form of energy or to impose taxes or fees on energy users to develop new energy sources. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Power Marketing Administrations:

Farm Bureau opposes provisions which call for the divestiture by auction of the Department of Energy's Power Marketing Administration's (PMAs) assets. The sale of the PMA transmission assets would result in the federal government abandoning a successful and efficient solution for providing affordable power in rural communities.

PMAs are essential not just for states and industry, but for rural communities and the tens of millions of Americans who rely on affordable and sustainable power. Since PMA costs are paid solely by customers, and not the federal government, public ownership generates a nonexistent deficit burden. (Amended 2021)

APS Rate Change:

We are opposed to the APS rate structure for irrigation non-use/standby time. Under the new rate structure, costs increased significantly. We encourage the Arizona Corporation Commission to oppose electric rate increases for any utility company if they negatively impact rates for agricultural production, including irrigation wells. (Amended 2019)

Low-Head Hydro Power:

Farm Bureau supports the development and use of low-head hydro-power units without government regulation or permits. (2017)

Grain Ethanol:

We believe ethanol policies, including incentives, should not cause significant market distortions to the detriment of sectors within the Agriculture industry.

We oppose any mandates on ethanol blend requirements for fuel. (2018)

Petroleum Refinery:

We encourage the construction and operation of state-of-the-art petroleum transporting and refining facilities within the state. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Power Line Siting, Rights of Way:

Public property should first be considered for rights of way for utility transmission lines as well as roadways and rail lines. The restrictive regulatory barriers of using federal and state lands for utility lines should be removed to facilitate routings on public land.

Utility transmission lines should be routed in ways to minimize the impact on private property.

We believe the County Board of Supervisors should have veto authority over the State Power Line Siting Committee recommendations affecting their county.

We oppose the construction of transmission lines through agricultural fields when viable alternative options exist, even if this placement incurs additional expense for the utility and its ratepayers. (Amended 2021)

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

County Departments of Environmental Quality:

We oppose creation of any new bureaucratic agency to address environmental issues. We oppose any legislation creating county departments of environmental quality. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Environmental Regulation:

We support uniform state and federal regulations governing agricultural practices and agricultural husbandry. In addition, we support uniform regulations among federal and state agencies. Further, we shall oppose more stringent regulations.

We support implementation and operation of environmental regulations within the state be done by state officials and not federal officials or agencies.

Environmental regulations that include enforceable, health-based standards should rely only upon readings taken in populated areas of impact to determine compliance.

Environmental best management practices (BMPs) are to be a set of guidelines developed for farmers and ranchers with significant input from producers. The BMP Compliance Program shall emphasize education rather than penalties. We support state and federal funded programs to assist producers with education and implementation of bmp programs. (2017)

Regulatory Rules and Enforcement:

All local, state and federal agencies that write and promote rules and regulations should be required to base regulations on sound science and proven facts. This policy applies to the BLM, Fish and Game, Forest Service, Endangered Species Act, EPA rulings and the State Land Department, and any other governmental agencies that have an impact.

We support policy and legislation that would require federal, state and local government to fully analyze and protect current and ongoing local customs, cultures and communities and the ability of people to thrive economically.

We should at all times challenge bureaucratic entities to ensure that they are following the intent of the law. Legislation granting authority to regulatory agencies should be more specific for the purpose of limiting agency interpretation of the law. Agencies should not constrict permit qualifications beyond the letter of the statute, regulate beyond their authority or construct requirements which are beyond those enforceable by statute.

When government entities conduct hearings on proposed rules, regulations, or legislation, the intent of those hearings must be to gather testimony from experts, not to hold managed hearings to promote what the entity has already decided to do. (Amended 2021)

Green Infrastructure:

In addition to their aesthetic value trees and plants in managed urban landscapes contribute significant environmental and economic benefits. As such, we should advocate for policies that ensure the “green” movement includes landscaping with water conserving plants and trees. (Amended 2021)

AGRICULTURE CHEMICAL USE**Agricultural Chemicals:**

Agricultural chemicals and drugs are vital to supplying the United States and much of the world with safe and abundant, reasonably priced, nutritious, and high-quality food, fiber and ornamentals. Farm Bureau supports the continued use of agricultural chemicals and drugs in a safe and judicious manner.

We oppose any curtailment of the safe and proper usage of agricultural chemicals and drugs unless peer reviewed research and published scientific data determine that injury to health and well-being would result from such usage.

Farm Bureau urges risk/benefits analysis be considered in the evaluations, restriction, or cancellation of any agricultural chemicals and drugs. Agriculture chemical tolerance and residue levels should be based on realistic levels of exposure or consumption. The setting of tolerances must be based on thorough, competent, peer reviewed scientific research and based on actual agricultural chemical use and usage information. Tolerance revocation should only occur on those agricultural chemicals that are proven to show unacceptable risk, not those that only pose a theoretical risk based on worst case and/or unrealistic default assumptions.

We recognize the economics of registration and re-registration for agricultural chemicals to be used on minor use crops often does not justify the cost. We therefore support immediate legislative and non-legislative solutions, increased funding to the federal IR-4 project, and a streamlined section-18 registration process to ensure the availability of minor use agricultural chemicals in Arizona.

We support expanded biological pest controls research to determine where biological pest control measures can provide a practical, economic substitute for or supplement to chemical controls.

We support improved and periodically upgraded training and certification programs on the proper handling, application, and safe use of agricultural chemicals. We encourage the creation of local, state, and federal programs for nonagricultural users of pesticides so that they may become better educated in the safe handling and application of these products. (Amended 2020)

Pesticides:

We believe the producer must have every advantage to produce food, fiber and ornamentals at the lowest possible cost. The Environmental Protection Agency has removed tested and reliable pesticides from the market, leaving the producers at the mercy of the natural enemies of crops and livestock.

Therefore, we recommend that no registered pesticides that have been used according to label be removed from the market without due process of public hearings and review using sound science where the risk-benefit ratio is considered and duly weighed. Review of pesticide registrations should include a board review, with the board being comprised of stakeholders.

Pesticide applications are performed only when necessary and always in a manner to minimize spray drift. Drift is undesirable for safety, environmental, and economic reasons. We support the development of safe standards in establishing the maximum amount of pesticide and/or herbicide drift away from the target area. We urge the regulating agency to utilize only peer-reviewed research and published scientific data to define drift and to establish reasonable standards for pesticide and herbicide applications.

The Arizona Department of Agriculture should be responsible for monitoring, regulating and enforcing use of pesticides by other governmental agencies. Governmental agencies should be required to follow the same policies and guidelines that agriculture producers must follow to prevent crop damage due to drift. The penalty should be the same for the governmental agency as it is for the private individual.

We support the exclusion of pesticide application from permit requirements under the clean water act when pesticides are applied in accordance with current regulations.

We strongly urge the EPA to develop appropriate guidelines allowing specialized low volume applications of pesticides. In the event the EPA is unable to rapidly respond to the new technology, we urge the Arizona Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, to develop guidelines and methods to allow the use of this new technology. Since this methodology has been proven to be environmentally and occupationally safer than current practices, we encourage the Arizona Department of Agriculture to impose a moratorium on the issuance of citations for low volume ground applications pending resolution of this issue.

We oppose all mandatory reporting of chemical use; however, we do support mandatory record keeping of restricted use chemicals and of those that are on the Arizona Groundwater Protection List. These records of use shall be kept on the farm for a period of two years and may be inspected by the appropriate state pesticide agency after showing of just cause. These records should be kept confidential. We encourage farmers to use Form 1080 in recording chemical use. If any additional state agencies require chemical use data, the agency shall obtain that data from the Arizona Department of Agriculture. The Department of Agriculture should create a secure system that allows farmers to voluntarily file Form 1080's electronically.

If mandatory reporting of all chemicals is required of agriculture, we support fair and equitable reporting for all non-agricultural uses of pesticides. These uses should be reported by the distributor to the Arizona Department of Agriculture or the Structural Pest Control Board. In order to reduce the burden of pointless and unproductive paperwork on state government and our agricultural producers and to thereby improve the efficiency of both parties, we support legislation which would require the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality to remove from the groundwater protection list any chemical which has been in use for ten years or more

and has not been detected as a contaminant, at higher than acceptable levels, in our state's groundwater wells.

We support the use of reusable or dissolvable containers for the packaging of chemicals. We urge all Farm Bureau members to use chemicals packaged in reusable or dissolvable containers whenever practical. We suggest that chemical manufacturers and dealers use reusable or dissolvable containers for all chemicals as soon as practical. Until this occurs, we support the cost-effective recycling of pesticide containers.

We support the establishment of amnesty dates for disposal of pesticides and pesticide containers. (Amended 2020)

Pesticide Applicators and Safety Training:

We encourage agricultural producers to provide training to their employees concerning pesticides and other safety procedures. To insure farm workers have access to the best and most effective training we believe that the Arizona Department of Agriculture should provide training, training materials and seminars in major agricultural areas around the state on a quarterly basis. Seminars and written materials should be in English and Spanish. (2020)

Worker Protection Standard Testing:

We support continued in person training for worker protection. We oppose mandatory yearly training of existing employees. In addition, we support the option of oral testing. We support written competency testing for applicators being available in Spanish and English. (Amended 2020)

Special Local Needs:

We support the concept of Special Local Needs (SLN) registration of pesticides and encourage the Arizona Farm Bureau Federation to support SLN registrations when warranted and inform members when applicable. (Amended 2021)

Special Use Labels for Agricultural Chemicals:

We strongly support renewal of special use labeling for agricultural chemicals. We also support a more equitable pricing formula for these chemicals. (2017)

Documentation of Injury/Pesticide Complaints:

We believe cases, where pesticide applicators are accused of harmfully exposing nearby residents, should be properly substantiated. We therefore request that state or county agencies require complainants to submit to appropriate medical testing procedures as dictated by sound science.

Modern agricultural chemicals are necessary tools for growing agricultural products. We support reasonable regulations of pesticide use and application, based on peer reviewed sound science. Legitimate complaints of pesticide-induced health issues must be documented by medical tests. Also, all medical tests must be made by agencies and laboratories using nationally accepted testing criteria. (Amended 2021)

Crop Protection:

We support a comprehensive benefit-risk assessment of pesticide uses prior to any cancellation actions. We further urge a periodic review of restricted chemicals not now in use for the purpose of possible reinstatement. Therefore, we oppose legislation or regulation based upon emotional, non-documented complaints. Documented medical tests should be required to substantiate legitimate complaints.

We support legislation, regulation, or legal decree based on sound science. (Amended 2021)

Soil Chemical Tolerance Levels and Clean-Up:

Standards for soil contamination shall be based on research supported by verifiable scientific data. Agriculturalists should not be held liable for practices and application of chemicals that were and are done in accordance with federal, state, and local standards.

The Arizona Department of Environmental Quality should be required to utilize bioremediation or composting on property with chemical contamination when these methods can be successful. (Amended 2021)

Public Education About Safe Use of Pesticides:

In order to educate and inform the public concerning the use of agricultural chemicals by Arizona farmers and ranchers, we encourage the Farm Bureau, agriculturalists, and the Arizona Department of Agriculture to advertise all forms of integrated pest management and pesticide application on radio, television and the Internet to explain the safety and benefits of agricultural chemicals. (2018)

Grower Information Program:

With numerous herbicide-resistant crops on the market and resistance to different herbicides being created, we support a voluntary grower information program (GIP), facilitated by the Arizona Department Of Agriculture website, to enable producers and crop consultants to post and share information with their neighbors in an effort to prevent unintended crop injury from herbicide applications. (Amended 2020)

Buffer Zones:

We support the current law that allows a farmer to determine whether he or she will provide a buffer zone for schools, day care centers or nursing homes developed adjacent to his or her property. Additionally, schools, day care centers, nursing homes and hospitals must bear the financial losses incurred to crop and agricultural landowners by the establishment of the buffer zone.

Developers should be required to provide buffer zones adjacent to agricultural land. (Amended 2021)

Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA):

We support a balanced implementation of the food quality protection act of 1996 (FQPA) and caution that any failure to do so will result in serious negative effects on pest management and

food, fiber and ornamental production in the United States, which in turn will lead to adverse impacts on the ultimate health and well-being of the American people.

Specifically, we support the following FQPA principles:

1. Sound science—decisions must be based on peer-reviewed science founded on reliable and accurate information;
2. Transparency—the public must be informed of the criteria used to assess risk and the process by which decisions are reached;
3. Balance—as EPA considers canceling older pesticide products as a result of the tolerance reassessment and re-registration process, it must give high priority to the review and approval of new products; and
4. Workability—the law must be administered in a practical and realistic way. If EPA fails to follow congressional intent, we support the use of options such as litigation and legislation.

We will work aggressively to persuade EPA to reasonably manage the FQPA. To achieve this, EPA must:

1. Use sound science and reliable information, as intended by Congress, in fulfilling the FQPA mandate to protect public health from unacceptable risk of exposure to pesticides;
2. Acknowledge to Congress and the public that sound science requires good data and validated methodologies, which require time to develop;
3. Not use unrealistic default assumptions in the tolerance reassessment process;
4. Abandon the idea of wholesale revocation of tolerances for the organophosphate insecticides;
5. Determine whether to apply additional uncertainty factors on a chemical specific, case-by-case basis, considering the weight of all available and reliable scientific evidence;
6. Use the most relevant toxicity endpoints in the tolerance reassessment process;
7. Establish and maintain a deliberate, consistent, and transparent decision-making process;
8. Give higher priority to making sound scientific decisions than to completing final tolerance reassessments by statutory deadlines. EPA should use the authority provided in the law to make preliminary decisions on tolerances and delay effective dates for a reasonable period of time to allow for data development;
9. Revoke only those tolerances that pose unacceptable risk, and avoid removing uses that only pose a theoretical risk based on worst-case assumptions;
10. Not revoke tolerances unless tolerance reassessments are based on actual pesticide use and usage information;
11. Propose and maintain policies and methods for risk allocation and make them available for public review and comment;
12. Allow adequate time for pesticide users to make a reasonable transition to alternative products and practices when existing product tolerances are revoked; and
13. Redress the current resource imbalance between tolerance reassessment and new chemical registration and accelerate the pace of making decisions on new products and uses. EPA should adopt an incremental risk approach to evaluating Section 18S.

To further achieve the goal of having a science-based workable goals of the FQPA, which will assure producers' access to safe, effective and economical crop protection products, we support:

1. Giving top priority to streamlining the section 18 registration process so products become quickly and readily available for emergency use;
2. Grower input on products that may lose crops from labels, prior to the agency and the registrant reaching registration decisions;
3. Developing additional incentives for registrants to register new products and reduced risk products;
4. Utilizing negligible risk to speed the registration process for sections 3 and 18 registrations and to reduce the cost of registration;
5. Increased funding for the interregional research project #4 (IR-4) so land grant institutions may conduct the necessary research needed to meet legislated guidelines for product review; and
6. Working with industry groups and the appropriate agencies to reduce the impact of the implementation of FQPA on the farm community. (Amended 2020)

FOOD SAFETY

Food Quality Standards for Raw and Fresh-Cut Fruits and Vegetables:

We support the concept of national standards published by the USDA and USFDA that are based on reasonable and sound science and are practical to implement. We believe, however, that these standards should take the form of “Good Agricultural Practices” and not the form of marketing orders or federal or state mandates for domestic producers. (2017)

FDA Advisories:

The Food and Drug Administration should have the responsibility to issue a statement advising the public when a food safety recall issue has been resolved and when a threat to the public no longer exists. This statement should be made with the same emphasis that food safety warnings are initially issued to the public. This statement should clearly identify the commodity.

FDA should not release business names to the public during or after an investigation, until a thorough investigation of the producer, harvester, shipper or marketer has been conducted, and the entity to be named publicly has been informed such a publication is to be made. Entities who cannot sell goods into the public marketplace should never be named publicly unless it can be proven that they adulterated the food or product through negligence.

In the interest of improving cooperation during investigations and in an effort to obtain better information for consumers and industry alike, FDA should revise their practices during investigations greatly to improve the speed and accuracy with which they conduct their efforts. Additionally, FDA’s authority to name individuals, businesses or brands should be greatly reduced, and Congress should enact legislation that grants legal recourse to anyone conversely affected by FDA’s action, instead of on a case by case basis requiring congressional actions for every situation. (Amended 2019)

Synthetic/Imitation Meat Products:

We oppose the labeling of products from alternative sources, including but not limited to lab-grown animal cells, synthetic creations from insects, plants, and non-animal components, as “meat”, “beef”, “chicken”, or “pork.”

We oppose the use of misleading marketing labels that lead consumers to believe that lab-grown products are better nutritionally and/or environmentally than traditional, naturally grown meat.

Imitation products should not be labeled as meat harvested in the traditional manner.

We support legislation that defines “meat” as coming from a live animal.

We support USDA, not FDA, oversight of synthetic lab-grown meat-like products. (Adopted 2019) (Originated in: Cochise County and Coconino County)

Retail Agriculture:

Arizona Farm Bureau recognizes the growing trend toward retail agriculture, i.e. farm stands/stores, U-pick operations, community supported agriculture and farmers’ markets.

We also recognize and support the Arizona Department of Agriculture’s “Arizona Grown” program and encourage growers to participate in this program to further the promotion of Arizona Grown products.

We also support the Arizona Farm Bureau’s “Fill Your Plate” campaign/website in its efforts to champion the rich and diverse agriculture industry in Arizona and encourage its expansion.

In order to protect themselves as well as their customers, Farm Bureau encourages producers who market their products directly to the public to adopt USDA’s Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP) to the extent they are feasible for the individual operation under existing statutes and laws.

All department inspections performed to ensure food safety are a benefit to the general public and should be paid for from the general fund. Forcing the inspection fees on the producer of raw product (who has no mechanism for passing the costs on to anyone else) would disproportionately apply the costs of a program that benefits consumers and many business entities. (Amended 2020)

Imported Agricultural Products:

Imported agricultural products should not be allowed to enter the United States unless such products have been proven to comply with all regulatory production, sanitation, and pollution standards and agricultural chemical restrictions and tolerance levels established for U.S. producers. (Reaffirmed 2019)

State of Origin Labeling:

We believe that it should be mandatory for all fresh market vegetables, fruits, and fish sold at the retail level to be clearly labeled to identify state of origin for the consumer.

State of origin labeling will further enable consumers to identify the seasonal movement of shipping regions and relative quality of their fresh market food. (Amended 2021)

Country of Origin Labeling:

We support voluntary Country of Origin Labeling. Country of Origin Labeling should be considered a separate and distinct issue from Animal ID. (2016)

Protection of Non-Traditional Crops:

We oppose traditional program crop producers receiving Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) payments, using that acreage to produce non-traditional crops, and thereby gaining an economic advantage over the non-traditional producers not receiving CRP payments. (Amended 2021)

Organic Standards:

To maintain the integrity of organic agriculture, we support established organic production standards.

In agriculture's efforts to eradicate harmful pests, we support the use of marked and genetically modified steriles, such as DS Red Sterile Pink Bollworm Moth, to avoid the use of harsh chemicals. The discovery of these insects on organic crops should not affect the status of the organic certification. (2017)

Labeling Of Genetically Modified Foods:

Farm Bureau opposes the mandatory labeling of foods derived from genetically modified (GM) plants and/or animals. The use of biotechnology in agriculture has greatly increased yields, decreased the amounts of pesticides used by farmers, and been proven safe by years of scientific study. Mandatory labeling of GM foods is not supported on any scientific basis, as no significant differences between conventional and GM food varieties have ever been recognized. Labeling of GM ingredients will give consumers a false impression that these foods are different and may lead to decreased demand for GM goods. This in turn may lead to crucial crop shortages, increased food insecurity and a decrease in advances within the field of agricultural biotechnology. For the same reasons, we also oppose any attempt by a city, county, state, or other local government to ban the production, marketing, or sale of GM foods. (2018)

WEED, INSECT, AND DISEASE CONTROL

Agricultural Inspection Stations:

We support cross training between U.S. Department of Agriculture inspectors and Arizona Department of Agriculture inspectors on Arizona rules and regulations as they apply to border crossings of agricultural commodities coming across Arizona borders. Arizona should reserve the right to inspect all agricultural commodities crossing Arizona borders. (Amended 2021)

Phytosanitary Inspections:

We support maintaining the cooperative agreement between the Arizona Department of Agriculture and the USDA to provide phytosanitary inspections and certification.

The Arizona Department of Agriculture needs adequate staff, provided through General Fund budgets, to perform inspections in a timely manner for Arizona grown products to be transported out of state or exported. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Prepass:

We oppose qualification for the Prepass Program of commercial carriers entering the state of Arizona carrying agricultural and horticultural commodities. We also urge the Arizona Department of Agriculture to continue working with the Prepass Program and the Arizona Department of Transportation to exclude agricultural carriers from the Prepass Program. Should the administration of the Prepass Program not respond in an effective manner, we would support the state of Arizona discontinuing the Prepass Program. (2018)

Agricultural Pests:

We support research and other activities to help control any agricultural pest that causes economic harm. (Amended 2019)

Medfly Trapping:

We support the funding of medfly trapping and/or eradication using the state's General Fund. This pest would not only be devastating to Arizona agriculture, but also to Arizona's urban areas. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Screwworm:

We urge continuation of the screwworm eradication program as needed. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Blister Beetle:

We request that the University of Arizona continue to monitor any changes in possible infestations of the blister beetle in Arizona and continue research efforts to combat the pest. (2018)

Mosquito Abatement:

Mosquito abatement requires the cooperation of property owners, but it should primarily be the responsibility of county and local health officials. (2017)

Corn Borer:

We should discontinue testing when a county is proven to be free from corn borer. (2018)

Citrus Disease Research:

Farm Bureau supports USDA APHIS research on pests, diseases, and detection methods in citrus fruit, including Asian Citrus Psyllid and the resulting citrus greening disease, specifically including metabolomics and specially trained dogs.

Citrus Quarantines:

We will actively support the implementation of quarantine barriers to control the infestation of citrus by introduced pests and diseases. In addition, other states and

countries must be required to actively work to control their pest infestations prior to any consideration being given to relaxing any quarantine regulations.

Sweet Orange Scab:

The USDA / APHIS requirement for disinfecting citrus fruit under the sweet orange scab quarantine should be removed for fruit being shipped to non-citrus producing states.

Argentine Citrus:

We oppose the import of argentine citrus into the united states, until that citrus is certified free of all harmful phytosanitary problems and pests. (Amended 2020)

Biological Control of Navel Orangeworm:

We support the use of the Center for Plant Health Science and Technology (CPHST) Phoenix lab to raise moths for the eradication of the Navel Orangeworm (NOW). (2020)

Aflatoxin:

We support continued efforts to manage and reduce aflatoxin in all affected crops and to resolve conflicts between the buyers and sellers of said crops. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Cotton Remnant Destruction and Pest Management:

We favor the continued prohibition of the practice of stubbing cotton in Arizona. The Department of Agriculture should strictly enforce its plow-down and planting dates. The state land department should develop regulations to ensure all state lands are in compliance with the department's ban.

The Department should work with the eastern counties in California, the adjacent Mexican valleys, and the Indian reservations to establish cotton insect host-free periods comparable to those of Arizona.

We support continued enforcement of host free periods for insect pest suppression in all cotton producing areas of Arizona.

We support the plow-down incentive known as the Plower Program initiated in 1991.

We support the ongoing boll weevil and pink bollworm maintenance programs.

We support the ongoing integrated pest management pink bollworm eradication program and full federal funding for that program.

We support full federal funding for the sterile moth program. (Amended 2020)

Bees in Agriculture:

Bees are essential to production agriculture. Domestic, feral, and native bees provide an important pollination service to farmers and ranchers. Bees are an essential agricultural tool and any restrictions on the use of bees would be a violation of the nuisance protection afforded farmers and ranchers under the state right to farm law. We oppose any efforts to hold farmers

and ranchers liable for bees foraging or harboring on their property. Bees are also important to the urban dwellers that enjoy growing plants and vegetables, which require pollination.

Education on colony collapse should not automatically blame pesticide use. It should include the stressors for bees including the varroa mite and other pests and parasites, disease, loss of forage diversity, bee nutrition, adverse weather conditions, and reduced genetic pool. (Amended 2019)

Salt Cedar Biocontrol Research:

We support use of mechanical or biological control of salt cedar (tamarisk) on our properties adjacent to rivers and riverbeds through private, state, or federal programs.

We support the expansion of the USDA Agriculture Research Service salt cedar (tamarisk) biocontrol research program into Arizona, with the understanding that the biocontrol insect shall not be declared an endangered species when the salt cedar problem has been controlled. (2018)

Weed and Pest Abatement:

Anyone purchasing farmland, including a political subdivision, and retiring it from agriculture shall be made legally responsible for keeping that land clear of any weeds, in order to protect adjacent farms and irrigation canals from wind-blown debris and seed contamination.

We recommend that state, county and local municipalities shall control weeds on borrow pits, rights-of-way, fences and their vacant lands.

In the interest of traffic safety, special effort should be made to keep all intersections clear of weeds and other growth on the right-of-way. Additionally, rights-of-way adjacent to agricultural land should be mowed before seed formation and shall be kept free of noxious weeds.

Utility companies and railroads shall be required to effectuate control of weeds within their rights-of-way where requested by residents in cultivated areas.

In rangeland areas, when any entity applies pesticides on rights-of-way or easements, they shall notify adjacent landowners two weeks prior to application.

The laws prohibiting the planting of noxious weeds, especially for wildlife or riparian management should be vigorously enforced. (Amended 2021)

Weed Resistance:

We support the use of multiple modes of action for herbicide application in order to prevent weed resistance. We support the good management practices recommended by the University of Arizona. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Native Species Reintroduction:

Federal, state, and local agencies should work closely with permit holders and private landowners whose land management expertise is a critical component for any native species reintroduction plan and management.

We believe permit holders and landowners should receive notice prior to any reintroduction or introduction of species to Arizona land or waters.

Furthermore, Arizona native species should not be introduced to areas of Arizona where that species has no prior history. (Amended 2020)

Invasive Plants:

We support monitoring, education and regulation of invasive insects and plants and discourage the use of invasive plants that have spread or may spread into native ecosystems and dominate or disrupt those ecosystems. We also encourage the use of native and non-native plant material, provided such material is adapted to a particular site. When determining the invasive potential of plants, we support assessments by qualified experts prior to the plant's introduction, sale or regulation in Arizona. (2017)

Puncture Vine (Bullhead):

We support use of biological and chemical control of Puncture Vine (Bullhead/Goathead) on properties through state programs. (2018)

Weed Control in Waterways:

We request that the Arizona Game and Fish Commission consider the stocking of weed infested lakes, ponds, and irrigation and drainage canals with the White Amur (*Ctenopharyngodon idella*). We support the continued stocking of the White Amur in all of Arizona at no charge to the landowner. (2017)

Plant and Animal Disease Control by Law Enforcement:

We should meet with and seek the cooperation of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to inform their agents of plant and animal diseases that may be spread by their enforcement activities and their potential liability. (Amended 2020)

LIVESTOCK AND ANIMAL CARE

Animal Rights:

We are opposed to the concept of animal "rights" and oppose the expenditure of public funds to promote the concept of animal rights. We support the ethical treatment of animals; however, we oppose any group or movement seeking to elevate concerns for the well-being of animals to a similar status as the rights of people.

We oppose initiatives/referendums/legislative movements that move to create animal welfare public policy that dictates standards above sound veterinary science and best management standards.

We support increasing the penalties for individuals and groups that violate and destroy property, both public and private, in the name of animal rights. (Amended 2020)

Animal Care:

Proper care of livestock, poultry and fur-bearing animals is essential to the efficient and profitable production of food, fiber and ornamentals.

Animal-based medical research benefits both humans and animals including pets, farm animals and endangered species. Vital research utilizing animals is necessary to ensure more effective human and veterinary medical practices. We oppose legislation and regulations, which would prohibit or unduly restrict the use of animals in research and education.

We support properly researched and industry-tested poultry and livestock practices that provide consumers with a wholesome food supply and enable farmers to improve the care and management of livestock and poultry. We oppose legislation that restricts or imposes specific handling, feeding and housing requirements.

We support an aggressive, comprehensive educational program presenting the facts of animal and poultry production for educational purposes to the general public and to schoolchildren.

We strongly oppose the use of educational materials in our public schools that discourage use of animal products.

We support the Animal Enterprise Protection Act of 1992.

We continue to cooperate with other agricultural and agricultural-related organizations to address the animal care issue.

We encourage companies in the business of providing animal feeds, shelter and health products to advertise the positive aspects of animal production rather than advertising the products used for animal production. (Amended 2020)

Animal Reproduction (Pet and Livestock):

We oppose any legislation that would seek to impose limits on the number of litters or newborn animals, including pets and/or livestock, that a breeder may produce in a given period of time.

We further oppose the use of vague or unspecified terms such as “humane housing” or “adequate shelter” in any animal rights bills which result in penalties to animal owners who do not meet these standards in the opinion of non-industry enforcers. (2018)

Domesticated Animals:

Domesticated animals running loose are a serious problem in some areas of the state. We request an expanded effort in the control of domesticated animals that roam off the owner’s property. We urge the government entities to enforce their leash laws and public awareness campaigns addressing food safety in vegetable producing communities. Pet owners should also demonstrate the same control over their animals near livestock operations. (2018)

Animal Abuse Reporting:

We support a mandated requirement that any employee within an operation who witnesses animal abuse report the incident to the operation's management within 48 hours or less.

We oppose unauthorized imaging on private agricultural property. We encourage the aggressive prosecution of violators. (Amended 2020)

Non-Ambulatory Animal Handling:

We support industry-coordinated, non-ambulatory animal handling educational activities and oppose additional unreasonable regulations.

We recommend:

1. The livestock industry opposes the shipment of non-ambulatory livestock from the farm to livestock markets or auctions;
2. Non-ambulatory livestock be properly handled or treated on the farm to avoid unnecessary suffering;
3. If the proper professional treatment on the farm fails, non-ambulatory livestock be humanely transported to slaughter or be euthanized on the farm and disposed of properly;
4. If livestock becomes non-ambulatory during transportation or while being held at livestock markets, such livestock receive appropriate veterinary treatment, and special arrangements be made to have such livestock immediately disposed of properly; we deplore illegal dumping of dead animals and insist that local and state authorities cooperate to prosecute to the fullest extent those who illegally dump dead animals;
5. The livestock industry supports additional research and evaluation of livestock husbandry including humane methods for the movement of non-ambulatory livestock, design of livestock production, handling and transportation systems;
6. The livestock industry encourages aggressive initiatives within its ranks to communicate the best modern animal husbandry and handling practices, including but not limited to:
 - a. Methods to prevent livestock from becoming non-ambulatory;
 - b. Information on practical and acceptable methods for the humane movement of non-ambulatory livestock; and
 - c. Facility designs that promote the safe and humane production and movement of livestock.
7. The continued support of non-inspected custom kill operations that are so vital to the livestock industry. (2020)

Livestock Health:

The proper use of antibiotics is essential to efficient, economic production of abundant, reasonably priced, high quality animal products. Usage of such medications employs substantial safeguards by producers to eliminate potential harmful residues. Based on the benefits to both consumers and producers, such usage should be continued in livestock and poultry production unless it is found by scientific research and data to be detrimental to public health.

We support legislation that assures continuation of veterinarians' ability to prescribe drugs and accepted extra-label usage of drugs needed for proper animal care. Veterinarian-prescribed and

FDA approved animal medication should be permitted to be stored at livestock production facilities in properly secured enclosures. (Amended 2021)

Feed Additives and Hormones:

The proper use of feed additives and growth hormones is beneficial to efficient, economic production of abundant, reasonably priced, high quality animal products. Usage of such supplements employs substantial safeguards by producers to eliminate potential harmful residues. Based on the benefits to both consumers and producers, such usage should be continued in livestock and poultry production unless it is found by scientific research and data to be detrimental to public health. (Adopted 2019)

National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS):

The mission of the National Veterinary Stockpile (NVS) is to provide the veterinary countermeasures animal vaccines, antivirals, or therapeutic products, supplies, equipment, and response support services that states, tribes, and territories need to respond to damaging animal disease outbreaks. Frequently, each state's national veterinary stockpile is insufficient to meet the state's needs in an emergency situation. The state's national veterinary stockpile inventory should be reviewed by the state department of agriculture's producer advisory committee at least once every five years to ensure it is sufficient to serve the needs of each livestock industry within the state in case of an emergency. (Adopted 2021) (Originated in: Navajo County)

Controlled Substances for Veterinary Use:

Farm Bureau supports allowing licensed veterinarians to carry with them, in their vehicles, such controlled substances that are legally registered to their premises. (Amended 2019)

Veterinarian Procedures:

We are opposed to any new laws, regulations or rules which mandate that a veterinarian or their staff be present to administer and/or perform veterinary procedures that have historically been done by ranchers, farmers or their employees. (2017)

Tele-Veterinary Practices:

Members use tele-veterinary practices on a daily basis, especially in rural areas. This tool should not be diminished by unnecessary regulations or restrictions. (Adopted 2021) (Originated in: Pinal County)

Livestock Traceability:

Animal identification systems should recognize and incorporate existing identification and movement tracking systems already in use, such as brands.

We will work with the Arizona Department of Agriculture on I) compliance with ARS 3-1214; and II) adoption of hot or freeze brands as the state's official animal ID. We urge the department to continue working with other Western brand states to accept Arizona cattle with a brand inspection and health certificate. We support voluntary traceability programs.

We oppose any mandatory traceability program and funding thereof.

Tattoos shall be recognized as a distinguishable identifier. (Amended 2021)

Foreign Animal Disease (FAD):

If a foreign animal disease has been detected anywhere in the United States or within 300 miles of a U.S. border, and a proven vaccine is available for the foreign animal disease, the importation of the vaccine should be allowed by any licensed veterinarian in any location within the United States. (Adopted 2021) (Originated in: Navajo County)

Animal Disease Lab:

Be it resolved that we strongly urge the continuation of the Arizona Vet Diagnostic Lab. (Amended 2020)

Hoof and Mouth Disease:

We recommend that Arizona Farm Bureau work closely with the state veterinarian to develop an emergency management plan to deal with any outbreak of hoof and mouth disease in Arizona or neighboring states. (2018)

Bovine Trichomoniasis:

We recommend the Arizona Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the cattle industry develop regulations for mandatory testing of non-dairy bulls 12 months of age or older that have not been designated for slaughter at time of sale or importation for trichomoniasis.

Samples will be obtained by an accredited 3rd party and be submitted to an ADA approved lab.

Bulls testing positive for trichomoniasis must be consigned to slaughter. Owners of bulls testing positive and their cattle producing neighbors must be notified.

In the event of a trespassing or stray bull, the rancher who locates the stray bull, may request and pay for an official trichomoniasis test of that bull. The owner of the trespass bull must be notified prior to the test. In the event of a positive trichomoniasis test the bull must be identified with an "S" brand and consigned for slaughter.

We support the efforts of all neighboring states in eliminating the disease. We recommend considering neighboring states' programs to establish our own.

Further, be it resolved that Farm Bureau, in cooperation with all livestock groups and universities, provide training to producers for self-testing of breeding bulls.

In support of this policy, we recommend it be a priority to establish an ad-hoc committee to address bovine trichomoniasis.

The ad-hoc committee shall consist of a representative from each beef producing county, a representative from the livestock auction community, a local veterinarian, the Arizona state veterinarian, Arizona Cattle Growers Association, and Arizona Farm Bureau. (2018)

Beef Cattle Brand Inspection (Excluding Dairy):

We support the livestock brand inspection programs, including self-inspection. We support consistency among beef producers using self-inspection books to transport or sell livestock.

The Department of Agriculture shall require official identification and site inspection for all non-range self-inspection applicants prior to issuing self-inspection books. Furthermore, Cattle should be inspected when there is a change of ownership.

If someone is convicted of rustling cattle or altering brands; they are not allowed to use a self-inspection book.

State brand inspections should be required, and provided within 24 hours, when beef cattle are sold, slaughtered, or moved out of state. We support the ability of producers to use the self-inspection process for custom slaughter with the exception of non-range self-inspection.

Livestock inspectors should only deal with state statutes rather than county ordinances.

Funding for inspection services for abandoned or neglected animals should come from the state general fund and/or penalties assessed on the offending party.

We encourage the Department of Agriculture to employ livestock inspectors who are experienced in the livestock industry. We encourage the use of part-time inspectors.

We recommend the placement of livestock inspectors throughout the state of Arizona (not just rural areas) with at least one inspector per county. (Amended 2021)

Brand Recording Policy:

We recommend brand recording be a standardized procedure with a hierarchical process and separation of duties integrated with current technology for management and record keeping. We propose moving from a brand book to a magnetic card system to provide traceability, accuracy, and cost effectiveness. The ADA Animal Services Advisory Board will oversee this system.

We reference the Arizona Supreme Court ruling dated August 5, 2017, that discontinues all duplicate brands.

Junior owners of duplicate brands will be given a reasonable time to transition to the use of another brand.

We strongly advocate for the expansion of the brand review board to include local sale barn operators and livestock operators with active cattle brands.

We recommend that brand recording responsibilities be moved from the Environmental Services Division of the Arizona Department of Agriculture to the Animal Services Division. (Amended 2021)

Livestock Inspection for Show Animals:

We should work with the Arizona Department of Agriculture to develop a streamlined inspection program for animals that are primarily used for livestock shows. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Interstate Commerce of Meat Products:

We support legislation that would allow interstate commerce of meat products that are state inspected. (Adopted 2021) (Originated in: Graham County)

Livestock Sale:

We oppose the federal or state government dictating the logistics of a livestock sale. (Adopted 2021) (Originated in: Navajo County)

Small Processing Capacity:

We support greater access to USDA inspections, greater capacity for state inspection, and low-interest federal loans for small processing facilities within the state of Arizona. (Adopted 2021) (Originated in: Yavapai, Coconino, and Pinal Counties)

Funding of The University of Arizona Campus Agricultural Center and the Food Product and Safety Laboratory:

The Food Product and Safety Laboratory is a state of the art, USDA inspected processing facility with full harvesting facilities, processing and fabrication rooms, and an interactive auditorium classroom connected to the fabrication room that allows instructors to use actual carcasses and demonstrate processing techniques in the classroom for instruction in meat animal composition and food safety.

The Food Product and Safety Laboratory provides food product safety and testing services for the food industry and consumers. A full range of testing and services are available including microbial evaluation, nutritional label analysis and chemical composition and microbial analyses of food items. The University of Arizona (UA) food product safety facility is the only one of its kind at a university in the southwest.

We support the continued funding of the UA Food Product and Safety Laboratory as well as maintaining operations at the current levels and keeping a designated footprint for the facility.

If the facility is sold, then the funds need to go toward financing a new local facility with a physical footprint that is equal to or larger than the current facility. (Adopted 2021) (Originated in: Pima County)

Carcass Beef Grading Standards:

We support the continued use of current methods, including dentition, for classifying maturity of carcasses presented to USDA for official quality grading. Due to the varied environments and management inherent in ranching, we oppose requiring actual age documentation. (2018)

Local Beef:

We support the creation of a tax incentive for businesses who purchase beef born and raised in Arizona. (Adopted 2021) (Originated in: Coconino County)

Beef Checkoff Fee:

Before increasing the Beef Checkoff fee, participants will be informed about the need for and purpose of the proposed increase with a proposed budget and annual report. (Amended 2021)

Feral Horses and Burros:

We are opposed to the protection of feral horse and burro herds within the state of Arizona. Feral horses and burros are abandoned and/or unauthorized livestock.

Feral horses and burros should not be classified as wild horses and should not fall under the protection of the Wild Horse and Burro Act.

We recognize the existing sanctuaries. We are opposed to creating any new wild or feral horse and burro sanctuaries on public lands or utilizing public funds.

We oppose the importation of feral horses and burros. (Amended 2021)

Recognition of Equine Industry:

The Arizona Revised Statutes section governing the Animal Services Division of the Arizona Department of Agriculture includes horses, mules and burros in the definition of livestock. Therefore, the Arizona Department of Agriculture should recognize the equine industry as an agricultural commodity and include equine activities as normal agricultural activities. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Equine Rescue Registry:

We support the Arizona department of agriculture's efforts to work with registered equine shelters to manage neglected or abandoned horses after the department has lawfully taken possession of the animals and all applicable waiting periods have expired.

We support the Equine Rescue Registry established in the Arizona Department of Agriculture and development of programs in relation to this registry. We urge improvements to the Department website to make this registry easily accessible and to add links to the individual registered horse rescues.

We encourage all equine rescues to meet the requirements and register with the Arizona Department of Agriculture 501(c)(3) equine rescue registry. (Amended 2020)

Equine Massage and Dentistry:

We encourage a change in Arizona state law to allow non-veterinarians who are trained as massage therapists or equine dentists to legally practice as certified massage therapists, certified equine chiropractors, or certified equine dentists without veterinary supervision. (Amended 2021)

Equine Usage Fees:

We oppose excessive fee increases for equine uses on federal, state and county lands. (2020)
(Originated in: Cochise County)

Equine Facilities:

Owners and/or operators of equine facilities should be encouraged to post signs informing users of the facility of the legal limits of liability. The signs should reference Arizona Revised Statutes 12-553, "Limited liability of equine owners and owners of equine facilities." (2018)

Equine Processing:

Arizona Farm Bureau supports development of an equine processing facility in Arizona.

We support a policy that allows equine processing facilities to be built in the United States. (2018)

Equine Training for Peace Officers:

We encourage all peace officers, especially those in rural parts of Arizona, to attend the Arizona Horse Council's Peace Officers' Standards and Training (POST) certified law enforcement training program as part of their continuing education. (2017)

Equestrian Property Use and Regulations:

Arizona Farm Bureau believes that all Arizona County Planning and Development Departments should recognize horses as livestock and exempt equestrian normal-use activities in rural areas from requiring permits. If the nature of a proposed commercial equine activity in rural zoned areas demands a special use permit, the owner's property rights should be recognized, and the owners should not be subject to continually changing requirements and unnecessary, exorbitant costs. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Transportation of Equine:

Transport of equine should not be regulated by federal law but rather as a states' rights issue.

We support the need and right to transport equine animals for any purpose, i.e. recreational activities, attending shows, aiding in the movement of cattle, processing, etc. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Boarding Stable Feed Liens:

We encourage the Arizona Department of Agriculture to clarify feed lien procedures. Equine feed lien procedures under A.R.S. § 3-1295 should be updated to better protect boarding managers from prolonged damages due to non-payment of boarding fees. Boarding managers should be allowed to forgo the lien process upon prior written agreement with the boarders allowing ownership of a boarded horse(s) if the boarding fees are not paid within 14 days. (Amended 2021)

Goats and Goat Products:

Arizona Revised Statutes (3-561) should recognize "goat and goat products" as a food product, the same as it does all other livestock sectors as generating food products. (2017)

COMMODITIES

Farm Programs:

Congress should not punish productivity by ignoring the fact that world commodity price competitiveness demands ever greater economies of scale. If budget restraints call for a reduction in agriculture's budget baseline, we believe that Commodity Credit Corporation and crop insurance programs could be eliminated entirely in exchange for calculation of income tax on a 7-year rolling average. (2017)

Specialty Crop Insurance:

Farm Bureau supports specialty crop insurance that is formally requested by commodity-specific producers and supported by market data. The following pre-requisites must be met prior to the creation of any specialty crop insurance product:

- a. Before anyone can develop a new crop insurance product, they must conduct a survey of the relevant industry to determine whether producers want the product.
- b. As crop insurance products are being developed, those potential products have to be accompanied by economic modeling to determine whether and how the product would impact regional and national markets. (2018)

Milk Pricing and Dairy Cooperatives:

We oppose any form of a national quota system for the U.S. dairy industry.

We oppose any program for mandatory supply control of milk.

We support Arizona's dairy cooperative, the United Dairymen of Arizona. We support bloc voting by dairy cooperatives. We oppose independent voting during the federal milk marketing order (FMMO) approval or referendum process. We oppose eliminating provision on a "no" vote during a referendum that results in the elimination of the entire FMMO.

We oppose the modification of the referendum approval threshold to require a two-thirds majority of the voting procedures and two-thirds majority of the voting milk volume in order to amend or issue an FMMO.

We oppose acknowledging regional differences in the cost of milk production and the incorporation of multiple component pricing into all classes of milk when assessing modifications in FMMO structure, formulas and price classes used to compute milk prices in order to better reflect current market conditions.

We support make allowances being indexed for factors such as inflation, labor, or energy. We oppose the modification of make allowances to include making them equal to a percentage of the commodity value and a cap based on the value of wholesale dairy commodities or classified milk prices. (Amended 2021)

Commodity Promotion:

We recognize the right of producers to promote increased research, sales and consumption of the commodities they produce.

We support all commodity promotion programs if the enabling legislation provides:

1. Individual producers the right to vote in a referendum on the initiation of any program for a commodity which they produced in the last three years;
2. For a referendum to be valid, a majority of votes cast must be affirmative in a well-publicized referendum;
3. An individual, partnership or corporation shall have only one vote;
4. At any time upon a petition of 10 percent of the producers of the commodity, a referendum will be conducted to determine if the program should be discontinued. To terminate the program, only producers shall be allowed to vote, and a majority of those voting must vote in favor of discontinuance;
5. A refund provision cannot be removed from a commodity check-off program making the voluntary program a mandatory program without a referendum to the producers;
6. That collected funds shall be used only for promotion, research, pest abatement and market development of the commodity being assessed and directed by the producers of these products; and
7. That only those persons who contribute monies to the respective programs shall be eligible to serve on the boards which administer such programs. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Fruit and Vegetable Standardization:

We continue to support the implementation of an opt-out program for fruit and vegetable standardization that ensures a representative number of growers support the opt-out proposal. (2018)

Liaison with Agriculture Commodity Organizations:

The highly varied circumstances and problems encountered in American agriculture have necessitated formation of many commodity organizations to address specific needs. Therefore, when a commodity group or Farm Bureau promotes, supports, or opposes a particular issue that affects a specific commodity group, there must be close liaison with the commodity group involved. We must always seek reconciliation of divergent viewpoints and a position of mutual support.

We support the participation of the Farm Bureau in a council, which promotes communication among all Arizona agricultural groups. We also support the participation of Farm Bureau in the Ag Summits.

We urge the Arizona Farm Bureau to contact all commodity groups prior to a delegate session to determine commodity concerns, needs and legislative priorities. As a result of this action, the Arizona Farm Bureau delegates can act on commodity issues with more complete knowledge. We request similar information and courtesy be provided to the Arizona Farm Bureau by the commodity groups.

We urge the Arizona Farm Bureau to contact all commodity groups immediately after a delegate session and inform them of policy actions taken. (Amended 2021)

Ag Economic Development:

We support the addition of a program that will close the gap reflected between farmer and consumer of gross receipts, per crop, animal, ornamental or fiber entities.

We need to work with economic development groups to attract agricultural value-added industries to Arizona.

We encourage more agricultural credits to help beginning farmers and ranchers. (Amended 2021)

World Crop Reporting:

The United States Department of Agriculture should promptly release to American producers all satellite and other sources of information on crop acreage and conditions such as production estimates, effects of weather and insect pressures in the United States and foreign countries. The lack of such pertinent information from the United States Department of Agriculture on acres planted throughout the world in major crops, results in wide swings in market prices, which are very costly to the American farmer. (2017)

Agricultural Products:

We support the efforts of all groups in promoting the consumption of all agricultural commodities. We urge the continued development of a program to promote the positive image of agriculture by the Arizona Farm Bureau. (Amended 2020)

Vineyards and Wineries:

Wine grape growing and wineries where grapes are processed into wine is value-added agriculture known as specialty crops. We support farm wineries, the expansion of vineyards, and the selling of wine produced in Arizona directly to consumers on premises. We also support the ability of farm wineries to sell, deliver, and ship wine directly to consumers off premises or directly to retail stores and restaurants. We support and will work with Arizona rural governments to ensure that farm wineries, vineyards, and on-farm tasting rooms are defined and regulated consistently as an agricultural use, agri-business use, and/or farming.

We support the wine industry's efforts to educate the public of the role of the wine grape industry in supporting a healthy statewide economy.

We support efforts by the USDA, Arizona Commerce Authority, or other entity to measure the economic impact of the grape-growing and wine industry. (2017)

Winery Cap Distribution:

We support increasing and/or removing production caps specifically for self-distribution of Arizona wines by Series 13 farm wineries. (Adopted 2021) (Originated in: Yavapai County)

Sustainable Agriculture:

Sustainable agriculture refers to an integrated system of plant and animal production that will, over the long term, satisfy human food and fiber needs, enhance environmental quality and the natural resource base upon which the agricultural economy depends, makes the most efficient use of both renewable and nonrenewable resources, sustains the economic viability of agricultural operations and enhances the quality of life for both agricultural producers and society as a whole.

The term “sustainable agriculture” should include all agricultural practices, including conventional agriculture, that meet the above definition. (Amended 2020)

Arizona Grain Council:

Wheat and barley produced in Arizona should be subject to a voluntary refundable check-off by the Arizona Grain Council. No remuneration should be given to first purchaser for collection fees. (2017)

Lending Institutions:

We support new legislation or regulations that would prevent lending institutions from including an “on demand” clause in term loans.

For credit worthy borrowers, allowances should be made to enable the lending institution to maintain a carryover note without putting the old and new loans into a non-performing status. We support changing the rules and regulations covering lending institutions to allow more readily accessible funds for agricultural operations.

We approve the current GSE (Government Sponsored Entity) status for the Farm Credit System (FCS). Farmers and ranchers should continue to serve on the board of directors of the FCS. We oppose commercial banks having access to money procured by virtue of the agency status enjoyed by the FCS. (2018)

Industrial Hemp:

We support the development, production and distribution of industrial hemp and will work with state and federal agencies to remove the federal schedule 1 registration from cannabis varieties that are primarily grown as an agricultural crop and contain less than 0.03% of THC (delta-9 tetrahydrocannabinol). We support timely registration of pesticides for use on hemp. Cannabis varieties staying under the THC 0.03% threshold and grown as an agricultural crop should be considered separate from cannabis grown for medical purposes as it relates to all zoning regulations. (Amended 2020)

Value Added Marketing:

We support exploring means of educating and assisting our members in a value-added approach to marketing raw agricultural commodities and developing new markets. (Amended 2021)

TAXES AND SPENDING

Definition of a Farm or Ranch:

A farm or ranch is land under common ownership with appurtenant improvements which includes all activities by the owner, lessee, agent, independent contractor and supplier conducted on such farm or ranch for the production and/or direct marketing of crops, nursery stock, livestock, poultry, livestock products, poultry products, agri-tourism or agricultural education activities with a commercial market value of not less than \$10,000 as customarily produced each year. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Agricultural Valuation for Small Farms:

Viable agricultural production can be conducted on parcels of less than 5 acres. All lands in agricultural production should be assessed for agricultural valuation. Arizona Farm Bureau will work with state and county officials to change assessment practices to acknowledge parcels less than 5 acres that include commercial farms and commercial equine operations as agricultural properties. (2017)

Priority Lien:

We support legislation that would provide ag producers a priority lien on crop, livestock, specialty crops and other ag products that are sold to brokers, processors, accumulators and end users to protect producers from losses due to non-payment or bankruptcy.

We support the ability of producers to repossess commodities before items are filed in bankruptcy if the commodity is identifiable.

Any producer should have the right to lawfully retrieve his product if payment is not made on that product under the terms of the contract or pursue any other legal remedy available to him. Farm Bureau strongly recommends that producers obtain signed agreements under the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) before delivering products on credit. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Government Taxes and Spending:

Tax revenues should not be raised except as attributable to increases in economic activity and population growth.

We support the concept of reducing and restricting spending and taxes at all levels of Arizona government as long as it reduces agriculture's overall tax burden and does not shift more taxes and fees to agriculture.

Fiscal restraint, prevention of waste, increased efficiency and reducing government regulations continue to be needed in reducing government spending. (2018)

State Property Tax on Real Property:

We oppose a state property tax levy on real property. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Property Tax Classification and Water Reductions:

Agricultural land shall be considered “in production” as long as it is maintained for agriculture, even with reduced availability of water. This policy does not apply to Maricopa County. During drought conditions or when water availability is limited, the classification process of agricultural land for tax purposes should be extended from three out of five years to three out of eight years of qualified agricultural uses. (Amended 2021)

Agricultural Status for Property Tax Assessment:

We recommend that in setting the value for agricultural lands, value be based upon current use; and oppose efforts to impose retroactive taxes and penalties on farmland sales based on future land uses. Tax assessors should not be authorized to change or interpret policy.

The state of Arizona’s income approach formula for the calculation of property tax is unfair to Yuma County. Factors that include value of water, rotation and amount of leases available are not considered in this valuation. We recommend that the tax committee continue to work with the Department of Revenue, and association of county assessors and our legislature, in finding wording that could permanently fix the inequities Yuma County has with the current formula.

We believe farm and ranch land value should be determined by evaluating typical leases, typical landowner expenses and typical farm lease frequency and practices in an area.

We support the agricultural tax classification for high-density and specialty crop operations including but not limited to production nurseries, viticulture, concentrated feeding operations, ratite operations, cotton gins, agri-tourism and agri-tainment. Further, we believe agricultural packing sheds, pressing rooms, wineries, storage facilities and elevators are also agriculture and should be reclassified as such.

All specialty crops and agri-tourism should be classified as agriculture production and qualify for the agriculture property tax classification.

We support measures that simplify the appeals process regarding property taxes and want to eliminate unnecessary assessments based on automatic classification when an agricultural property is sold. Furthermore, we are opposed to regulations requiring agriculture operations to renew their agricultural tax status on a regular basis.

The Arizona State Legislature must recognize that the majority of Arizona farmers and ranchers need off-farm income to survive. Agricultural status must be based on agricultural use.

Assessors must be prohibited from demanding excessively intrusive and irrelevant information from agricultural status applicants such as but not limited to land management plans. Specifically, assessors must be prohibited from demanding statements of non-agricultural income from applicants for agricultural tax status. Non-agricultural income of the applicant is irrelevant to whether or not a property is being used for agriculture. Agricultural facilities should be considered agricultural use if it is used for sales of farm products.

We support repeal of the requirement that all lessors and lessees of agricultural land submit annual lease information.

We request the Legislature revise the statutes concerning Agricultural status for tax classification of properties so that the language concerning a “reasonable expectation of profit” be eliminated and replaced with language requiring a minimum level of agricultural use, while allowing for periods of years when land must be taken out of production.

We will seek legislation allowing retroactive application and awarding of agricultural tax status in cases of repossessed farmland.

Counties should not impose laws, rules, regulations or more restrictive interpretations of state or federal laws with respect to classifying agricultural property for property tax purposes.

Classification of real property for property tax purposes should be consistent with federal law in recognizing vineyard and winery products as agricultural products until they are taken “out of bond”. Only the land and improvements dedicated to the sale or distribution of agricultural products after they are taken out of bond should be classified as commercial. (Amended 2021)

Agricultural Status and Exemptions:

A county assessor’s determination that an operation qualifies for agricultural status and exemptions should be binding on all other agencies within county and local government. (2020) (Originated in: Yavapai County)

Agricultural Grazing Land Property Tax:

When determining property tax valuation of grazing lands, we recommend that statute and the Arizona Department of Revenue policy and procedure consider deeded lands, federal grazing leases and state grazing leases. Additionally, deeded acreage should be part of an economically viable ranch or meet the minimum standard of 40 animal units carrying capacity. (Amended 2020)

Personal Property Tax:

We support repeal of the personal property tax. In the event taxes are required, taxes should be prorated for those who move equipment from one state to another.

Until such time as this tax is repealed, we support legislation that would exempt farm machinery and farm supplies from personal property taxes. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Tax Base Protection:

Removal of valuable property from the tax rolls by governmental acquisition reduces total assessed valuation on the tax rolls, thereby increasing the tax rates on other property. Legislation should be enacted, requiring the governmental entity or Native American tribe acquiring property outside its jurisdiction to pay an equal amount in lieu of taxes annually. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Sales and Use Tax:

We believe that all inputs necessary to conduct normal farming or ranching activities should be exempt from sales and use tax:

1. New and used agricultural machinery and equipment, supplies and unlicensed farm vehicles;
2. Fertilizer, chemicals, and fuel used for agricultural purposes;
3. Raw agricultural products used to produce a finished product;
4. Agricultural lease;
5. Agricultural improvements that have any wildlife benefit;
6. Equipment necessary for the production, extraction, and cooling of milk, cow feeding, and comfort.

We believe food products/groceries should not be taxed.

We support simplification of the process required to utilize sales and use tax exemptions.

We oppose efforts to expand the scope of the sales tax to cover all business services.

We oppose the elimination of the sales tax exemptions for agricultural and mining industries.
(Amended 2020)

Severance Taxes:

We support amending current severance tax funding formulas to ensure equitable distribution of severance tax revenues to the counties and communities where the taxable materials originated.
(2018)

Possessory Interest Tax:

We oppose the implementation of a possessory interest tax on any agricultural lease. (Reaffirmed 2020)

State Income Taxes:

We support continuation of the state income tax as a mix of taxes collected by the state for operation of the state. Government needs to maintain a sound fiscal policy.

We support tax credits that support small business. (2017)

Arizona Racetrack Gaming Policy:

To maintain horse racing as a part of agriculture in Arizona, Farm Bureau supports legalization of casino-style gambling at race tracks in the state, on the conditions that 45% of every gaming dollar be paid into the state general fund and that 75% of those funds be paid to the county fair and agriculture promotion fund to support county fairs, Arizona State Fair and the Arizona National Livestock Show. (Amended 2021)

Estate and Capital Gains Tax:

We support the complete, immediate, and permanent elimination of inheritance and estate and capital gains taxes.

Until permanent repeal is achieved, a fair and reliable way to transfer a business from one family generation to another should be developed. Such policy would exempt taxation on the first \$10 million dollars per individual and shall not exceed a tax rate of 20% after the \$10 million has been surpassed. (2017)

Arizona Income Tax Returns:

We oppose Arizona income tax returns being processed outside the state of Arizona. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Tax Credit Classification:

We support the recognition of an agricultural business owned by stockholders, partners or LLC as a commercial operation. As such, we believe that the business should be eligible for tax credits applicable to commercial operations, including credits for improvements placed on housing owned by the operation. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Tax credits:

Agriculture is a major contributor to rural and economic development in Arizona. State tax credits will support agriculture and preserve working farmland, increase tourism and overall economic growth. State income tax credits should be available to individuals, partnerships or corporations for purchasing of new equipment in Arizona. (2017)

Heritage Fund:

We recommend that Heritage Fund monies stay with the Arizona Game and Fish Department budget and include reparations for wolf depredation. (Amended 2021)

REGULATORY

Ag Certainty:

All regulations which impact agricultural operations should be clear, concise, reasonable, affordable, and implementable for the operation. Agricultural operations should be regulated on what they physically have in-place, not what could potentially be constructed in the future (such as regulating a lagoon as a digester because it could potentially be covered to capture gas). Regulations should be written in such a way that a layman can discern what is required. Air and water quality regulations should not contradict each other. Regulations which are not complete, under litigious proceedings which could affect the regulation's requirements, or have parts which have not been finalized, should not be put into effect. All regulatory development, policies, and interpretation should go through a transparent stakeholder process; internal regulatory agency memos and guidance documents are not acceptable ways to develop regulations, set regulatory policy, or determine how to interpret the regulations.

Agricultural operations should be given emission reduction credits for the installation, implementation and use of emissions reduction technology; these types of credits should be extended to both air and water quality improvement technologies and practices.

We are strong believers of environmental protection and support the voluntary use of reasonable, implementable, and cost-effective control technologies. Where regulatory changes mandate specific types of control technologies be installed, a reasonable timeframe to implement and pay for the required new technologies should be provided. In addition, for those operations who have an existing control technology (voluntary or mandated), the timeframe should allow for the full depreciation of the existing control technology prior to a new technology being mandated. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Regulatory Reform:

We favor repeal of unenforced and/or unenforceable state and local laws. These laws, while unenforced, may create potential civil liability and be used as political hammers or bargaining chips. We encourage passage of state and local laws which will negate such regulations. (Amended 2021)

Regulatory Action Plan Penalties:

When a state is required to produce an action plan by the EPA or other federal regulatory agency, the state has one year to produce such a plan. If the state agency has not submitted to the EPA or other federal regulatory agency a completed remediation plan within 12 months following notification by the EPA or other federal regulatory agency the state will pay the affected counties at least \$2,500 a day until the plan has been submitted. All accrued penalties shall be paid within 60 days of the start of the next fiscal year. (Adopted 2021) (Originated in: Yuma County)

Arizona Department of Agriculture:

We support an adequately funded, director driven Arizona Department of Agriculture. The agricultural groups shall have input into selection of the director. The director shall have agricultural advisory committees. The director shall formulate the program and policies of the Department and adopt administrative rules to affect its program and policies.

The Department's primary role shall be that of serving and regulating the agricultural industry to protect the public's health, protect agriculture from economically damaging pests and diseases and regulating services on which agriculture depends.

After the department's primary role of serving and achieving regulatory compliance is fully accomplished, its secondary role will be to stimulate, encourage and foster the Arizona agricultural industry. The department should promote a better understanding and more efficient cooperation among producers, dealers, buyers, food editors and the consuming public. The department shall encourage and support the promotion efforts of commodity promotion councils, as well as, other public and private entities interested in promoting Arizona agriculture. The department should educate and promote accurate statements regarding GMO's, organics, and gluten. These activities should only be undertaken after the primary role of protecting and achieving regulatory compliance is fully accomplished.

We recommend that the five-member advisory council of the Arizona Department of Agriculture include no more than two members from any one county. Because of the importance of the activities of the Arizona department of agriculture to agricultural producers, we encourage the director to work closely with the advisory council. To make the department more responsive to farmers and ranchers, we support giving the advisory council more policy-making authority, including veto power over the director's decisions. Farm bureau members should be encouraged to interact with advisory council members to lend them support from the industry. The Arizona department of agriculture should follow the lead of the agricultural industry.

We believe that the Arizona Department of Agriculture should provide ample inspection services for facilities that require inspection. Lack of inspectors should never be a limiting factor in the expansion of existing agricultural operations or new agricultural operations or facilities in the state. Furthermore, state inspections should be sufficient to allow for interstate commerce where appropriate. We support the cross training of inspectors where appropriate and efficiencies can be realized within the department of agriculture.

We believe the Arizona Department of Agriculture should conduct an effective, ongoing education program to help farmers and ranchers comply with all existing department laws and rules. Enforcement of the Department's regulations shall emphasize helping the agricultural industry learn what the regulations are and what the industry can do to come into compliance. To that end, department personnel should be moved from the enforcement to the consultation and training office within the department.

Legal counsel should be a staff representative from the Attorney General's office who has an agricultural background. The Arizona Department of Agriculture should be authorized to employ independent legal counsel if needed for a specific issue.

All agricultural regulatory authority in statutes, currently under the jurisdiction of state agencies, as appropriate should be placed under the jurisdiction of the Arizona Department of Agriculture. Each agricultural regulatory issue must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Those agricultural laws and regulations that are placed within the Arizona Department of Agriculture should only be technically changed. No additional regulatory authority should be added to these existing statutes and regulations. (Amended 2020)

Support for the Arizona Department of Forestry And Fire Management:

Arizona Farm Bureau supports the continued autonomy of the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management. (Adopted 2019) (Originated in: Pinal County)

Department of Agriculture Permits:

We support access to online resources such as licensing, permitting, training, and continuing education.

We support the Arizona Department of Agriculture streamlining permitting processes by going to biennial renewals and a single renewal of multiple permits where appropriate. Additionally, we support licensing renewals having the same renewal date. (Amended 2020)

Livestock Loss Board:

We support the movement of the Livestock Loss Board from the Arizona Game and Fish to the Arizona Department of Agriculture. (Adopted 2021) (Originated in: Cochise County)

Proof of Citizenship:

We believe requiring proof of citizenship by the director of the Department of Agriculture for renewal of licenses or permits is not dictated by law and should not be required by the department. (Reaffirmed 2019)

County Fair and Department of Agriculture Funding:

County Fairs Livestock and Agriculture Promotion Fund should be used exclusively for the purpose of promoting the livestock and agricultural resources, and not to be used at the will of county parks and recreation, or county fair departments, for other purposes and expenses when funding a county fair. (Amended 2021)

Fund Sweeps:

Special fees and assessments are funds held in trust by the state of Arizona and should be treated as such. Funds collected for specific services from producers shall be used for those services and remain with the commodity program from which they are derived and should cover only direct costs and should not cover department administrative costs nor be remitted to the state general fund. (Amended 2020)

Agricultural Warranties:

We favor state legislation exempting raw agricultural products and the sale of Arizona livestock from implied warranty laws. (Amended 2021)

Biotechnology Regulation:

The Arizona Department of Agriculture should be the agency responsible for regulating agricultural biological advancements including irradiating food. Genetically modified organisms (commonly referred to as ‘transgenic’) are organisms derived from somatic cell fusion or direct insertion of a gene construct, typically but not necessarily from a sexually incompatible species, using recombinant DNA techniques and any transformation technology (e.g., bacterial vectors, particle bombardment, electroporation).

We urge the adoption of a nationally and internationally accepted definition of biotechnology-derived products. We also urge international harmonization of scientific standards and trade rules.

We support increased efforts through biotechnology to more rapidly develop consumer beneficial traits, to increase the marketability of our products to solve environmental concerns, to increase net farm income by decreasing input costs and to improve product quality.

We urge state and national political leaders to develop a positive national strategy for biotechnology research, development and consumer education. Part of this strategy should include an open and frank dialogue with all interested parties. We believe that competitive advantage in world markets will be maintained only by the continued support and

encouragement of technological advancement. We encourage USDA to take the lead in coordinating efforts to evaluate and move approved products and technologies to the marketplace in a timely manner. The approval of new products should be based on safety and efficacy criteria. U.S. government agencies, particularly the USDA and the food and drug administration (FDA), should continue to serve their respective roles in providing unbiased, scientifically based evaluations concerning the human and animal safety and wholesomeness, as well as the environmental impacts of biotechnology-enhanced commodities. U.S. government agencies should evaluate whether there are improvements in the regulatory approval process that could be made to further enhance consumer confidence. Consideration of socio-economic criteria should not be required. We favor strong patent support to encourage these new technologies. Patents should be broad enough to provide reasonable protection of development costs but should not be to so broad as to grant one developer the right to a whole class of future developments. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Grain Inspection Packers and Stockyards Administration:

We request the Grain Inspection Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) refrain from proposing any rules that will have market distorting impacts.

We request the Grain Inspection Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) provide a thorough and comprehensive practical, legal and economic analysis of the costs and benefits of proposed rules. Following such discussions and analysis, we request that GIPSA issue separate, appropriate, clear and legally supportable rules, consistent with Congressional grants of authority, for each of the poultry, cattle and hog industries, recognizing that each segment of the meat industry is unique.

We oppose any rule that limits sales or prohibits packer to packer sales or sales to affiliated companies. (2017)

Certified Nurseries:

We support voluntary certification of nurseries. (2017)

Seed Mediation:

We support seed mediation or arbitration procedures that will be beneficial to the seed industry and users. (2018)

Hay Standards:

We support continuing the voluntary inspection and/or grading of hay sold in Arizona. Grading and analysis are currently available to anyone who desires this service through laboratories providing the information. Requiring new regulations on all hay sold would be an unnecessary and expensive tax on producers and buyers. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Karnal Bunt:

Karnal bunt should be immediately deregulated and handled as a quality issue. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Scale Certification:

Arizona Department of Agriculture Division of Weights and Measures should certify private scales at a reasonable charge. (2017)

Mountain Standard Time:

We recommend that the State Legislature keep Arizona on Mountain Standard Time. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Hazardous Waste Disposal:

We favor the development of a comprehensive hazardous waste disposal system for Arizona. We are in support of county hazardous waste collection centers so that all county residents have a place to take hazardous waste. We believe the most environmentally sound and economically practical approach is to establish regional detoxification sites. Hazardous waste, if practical, should be neutralized or detoxified prior to being transported to permanent disposal sites. This approach reduces public hazard during both transportation and ultimate disposal.

Manure shall not be classified as a solid, industrial, or hazardous waste. (Amended 2021)

Illegal Dumping:

We oppose any attempts by the state land department to put agricultural leases at risk as a result of third-party illegal dumping. We strongly urge legislation increasing the penalties for illegal dumping. We urge increased enforcement on this matter and support the posting of signs similar to that of highway markers stating no dumping and also the penalties. Penalties should include a minimum amount of mandatory public service for anyone convicted of illegal dumping in addition to the monetary fines.

We support the use of state superfund money for cleanup of hazardous waste illegally dumped on private property by unknown persons.

The state of Arizona should require all county governments to provide adequate public refuse collection sites at no charge to the public. General tax revenues have funded this service and should be used again. All refuse collection sites need to be open seven days a week. The charging of dumping fees, lack of refuse collection locations and restrictions of dumping hours all lead to illegal dumping on farms and in desert areas the expense to clean up the illegal dumping far outweighs the cost of operating the refuse sites.

Landowners should not bear the cost of cleaning up illegal dumping on private property. General tax revenues should fund this process. (Amended 2020)

Sanitary Landfills:

We are opposed to the rigid inflexible standards imposed by the Environmental Protection Agency, the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality and some counties. These create greater, more dangerous problems than they solve. These problems include:

1. Numerous closures of landfill sites;

2. Excessive distances to travel to remaining sites;
3. Indiscriminate disposal of garbage and live or dead animals on public lands, private lands, along roadways, etc., creating definite, serious health hazards; and
4. Refusal to accept empty pesticide containers that have been prepared for sanitary land fill disposal according to label directions.

We favor further legislative and regulatory changes, which will liberalize rules for operation of sanitary landfills in low-density rural areas. We oppose regulations for farm or ranch resource areas.

Landfills need to be developed in areas where there will be no negative impact to groundwater or aquifer quality. (Amended 2020)

Property Lien Release:

Any entity filing a lien against real or personal property for recording of debt(s) will be required by law to file a lien release within sixty (60) days of satisfaction of the debt. A lien holder may be exempt for one year from filing the release if the debtor signs an exemption. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Regulatory Compliance Inspections:

Regulatory agencies using police authority to seize private property or the use of private property for the purpose of regulatory inspection is an unconstitutional police action against the citizens of the United States of America and Arizona.

We shall seek legislation which will bolster our constitutional freedoms and rights as citizens by specifically prohibiting these kinds of “policing actions” and:

1. Require federal, state and local regulatory agency inspectors or auditors to give advance notice of inspections or audits with details of the items to be inspected or audited;
2. All such inspections shall be conducted by inspectors or auditors in person. No satellite or aerial imaging shall be used for regulatory monitoring or enforcement unless governed by a federal consent decree.
3. No regulatory enforcement action should be taken against agricultural production or processing facilities based upon satellite or aerial imagery;
4. Require that regulatory agencies and inspectors or auditors shall follow due process when taking action against a citizen or business;
5. Require that a complete copy of any and all regulatory inspection or audit reports shall be promptly furnished without charge to the citizen or business inspected or audited; and
6. Require regulatory agency inspectors or auditors to apply regulations in an equitable and consistent manner. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Arizona Corporation Commission:

The Arizona Corporation Commission staff should include representation from the agricultural community. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Agricultural Improvement Districts:

We oppose legislation that would bring Agricultural Improvement Districts or other instrumentalities of the State under the control of the Corporation Commission. (2017)

Compliance and Federal Funding:

We oppose the withholding of federal monies, grants, or matching funds to force local or state compliance with federal rules or regulations. (Amended 2021)

United States' Sovereignty:

We do not recognize the United Nations as legal authority. We oppose giving up United States' Sovereignty to the United Nations on any cause including Agenda 21. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Weather Information:

We support the accurate, timely and localized reporting of weather information and the maintenance and adequate funding of current weather analysis and information dissemination systems that are useful to producers in their particular area.

Federal, state, and private agencies should work together to improve these systems and the coordination of user support and federal funds to assure continuity and improvement. (2018)

AZMET Program:

We encourage the further development and implementation by the University of Arizona of the AZMET (Arizona Meteorological Network) weather reporting system for the purpose of providing current and historical weather data to farmers to assist them in farm management decisions. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Mobile Communication:

We oppose a ban on the use of mobile communication devices while driving. (Reaffirmed 2019)

GPS Band:

The mobile satellite service band should be reserved to military and agricultural global positioning systems (GPS). GPS has improved production and efficiency in agriculture and should be preserved for agriculture's future use.

New technologies such as LightSquared should not be able to degrade the GPS frequency bands we currently use. (2017)

Cell Phone Towers:

We support the erection of cell phone towers in rural areas, including federal land, to improve telephone and data reception. Cell towers should be sited in non-farm corridors or adjacent to power lines so as not to cause additional obstructions for aerial applicators and other farm and ranch equipment. (Amended 2020)

Satellite and Aerial Images:

We oppose the use of satellite or aerial imaging of agricultural land for the purposes of harassment, litigation of an agricultural operation or individual, or regulatory monitoring and

enforcement, except for a federal consent decree. We oppose the use of aerial imaging as the sole source of natural resource information in land management policy decision making. (Amended 2019)

Mail Delivery:

We endorse and support the Uniform Rural Addressing program in all fifteen Arizona counties. (2017)

LAW AND ORDER

Law Enforcement Funding:

The Arizona Farm Bureau supports full funding of local, state, and federal law enforcement.

We oppose defunding of local, state, and federal law enforcement. (Adopted 2021) (Originated in: Yuma County)

Criminalization of Environmental Law:

To obtain a criminal conviction under state or federal environmental law, an agency must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that a person knowingly and with specific intent violated the law. (2019)

Enforcement of Federal Officer Ethics:

Agricultural producers victimized by damaging and unethical abuse of federal authority, assert that federal officers should recuse themselves from decision making in all circumstances where they may allow their personal views to unethically affect their work as public employees. We support appropriate provisions, within the power of the state, be established to provide for consequences for federal officers if they misrepresent facts or sources or lie about matters that impact Arizona citizens and businesses. (2017)

Terrorism:

Agri-terrorism should be a state and federal felony offense. (Amended 2021)

Natural Disasters:

Natural disaster areas designation should not be constrained by state or county lines. Infrastructures or facilities damaged by these disasters may be located across jurisdictional boundaries. We believe it is unjust discrimination to deny aid to a facility that serves a designated disaster area located in an adjoining jurisdiction that is not designated.

We urge the Arizona Division of Emergency Management Policy to grant exceptions in this kind of situation. (Amended 2021)

Firearms:

Since the Constitution of the United States guarantees to each citizen the right to keep and bear arms, we believe state or federal regulation of firearms to be an infringement on the rights of citizens.

We strongly reaffirm our right to bear arms.

We support mandatory imprisonment of any person convicted of a felony involving use of firearms.

No political subdivision can pass an ordinance regarding the control or use of a firearm, which nullifies, infringes, or supersedes 2nd Amendment rights. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Drug Education and Enforcement:

We support effective enforcement of present laws and the enactment of new legislation where needed to prevent the importation, manufacturing, and distribution of such materials.

We support effective penalties including rehabilitation measures for first offense users and urge increased penalties for those engaged in the illegal distribution or sale of narcotics and drugs.

We oppose legalization of marijuana for recreational use. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Court Compensation:

We support legislation requiring the courts to recover costs of court appointed attorneys whenever possible. (2017)

Compensation for Victims:

We encourage the judicial system to require the convicted criminal to make restitution to the victims of the crime with costs of prosecution reimbursement to appropriate governmental entities. (2017)

Farm and Ranch Liability Protection Policy:

We support liability protection for farmers and ranchers from frivolous lawsuits. Individuals must recognize there are inherent risks including, without limitation, the risk of animals, land and water conditions, structures or equipment used in farming or ranching operations, that may contribute to injury or death. (2017)

Public Events Liability:

Farm Bureau supports the protection of property rights and the full enforcement of trespassing and liability laws in any event, but with specific consideration to public events. In particular public events (i.e. festivals, carnivals, hot air balloon, marathons, etc.) Where landowners may be impacted, and that are organized by any city, county or named organization, should have written approval from the landowner for the use of their land. Farm Bureau recommends that public event applications must address potential for trespassing and approval from landowners before issuing a permit or use. If trespassing occurs during the public event, the trespasser, named organizer and named organization or governing jurisdiction of the event will be held responsible for any costs associated with damage and liability due to trespassing. (Adopted 2021)
(Originated in: Maricopa County)

Frivolous Lawsuits:

We recognize the right of individuals to seek redress. However, when individuals file frivolous suits, we feel this is a flagrant violation of this right, and that the person who filed the suit should pay the cost of such actions, including court costs. This is particularly true of workers' compensation suits. (Amended 2020)

Limited Liability of Irrigation Districts:

We support legislation limiting the liability of irrigation districts from claims or lawsuits arising from recreational or other incidental users of irrigation district property. (2017)

Human Trafficking and Slave Trade:

As an organization, we believe in the freedom and personal dignity of all individuals. We support the elimination of modern-day slavery and all forms of human trafficking including and not limited to prostitution, pornography, and the cybersex trade. (Amended 2020)

ELECTIVE OFFICE AND REFERENDUMS

County Authority:

We believe that counties should be granted powers commensurate with the responsibilities with which they have been charged. Counties should not be allowed to impose codes or laws which are more stringent than state or federal standards. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Pro-Tem Judges:

We support the use of non-attorney pro-tem judges in the justice court system. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Election Activities:

We believe that limitation on the amount of contributions on political campaigns is an unrealistic and unjust restriction of constitutional rights. (2018)

Elections:

In a political election, in which there are two or more candidates from one party vying for the same political office, and there is no other candidate running for the same political office from any other political party, or any legal write-in candidate, then the political race is subject to the general election where the race is decided by the community as a whole. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Public Funding of Campaigns:

We oppose the use of public funds to finance a candidate's campaign. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Arizona Initiative Process:

We believe that the Arizona citizens' initiative process in its present form results in "taxation without representation". In 2009, Arizona had the highest budget deficit to expenditure ratio of any state in the union. Over fifty percent of Arizona's annual budget expenditures are a direct result of initiative compliance funding mandates, yet most initiatives have been passed by less than twenty percent of registered voters.

We support an Arizona Constitution amendment that includes the following:

1. The number of validated signatures necessary to qualify a ballot initiative is to be determined and required for each County and based on the highest number of qualified votes cast in any of the previous five general elections.
2. Funding disclosure requirements for initiatives are to be the same as those for state office candidates.
3. Initiatives must designate full funding source(s) that do not include the state general fund as a revenue source.
4. Five years after passage of a statutory initiative it must be reaffirmed by passage in the legislature and its sources of funding are to come under the control of the legislature. (Amended 2020)

Legislative Districts:

We oppose the arbitrary division by legislative boundaries of rural towns, communities and areas where common economic and social bonds exist. (2017)

Non-Taxpayer Office Holders:

We oppose counties being zoned in supervisory districts that will permit non-taxpayers to hold office enabling them to set policy for taxation. (2017)

Governmental and Elected Officials Health, Welfare, and Fiscal Responsibility:

We believe that all elected and appointed officials and government and public employees should be required to adhere to the same laws, policies, procedures, regulations and requirements as private citizens and businesses, and that they should be held fiscally responsible for operating within budgets. (Amended 2021)

LABOR

Government Payment of Contractors:

Government agencies should be required to pay contractors, so they can pay subcontractors for services rendered within thirty days of billing after completion of the work. (2021)

Cost Plus Contracting:

We urge that “cost plus” contracting be prohibited for procurement contracts involving a government agency, political subdivision, or public service utility. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Right-to-Work:

We will continue to insist on rigid enforcement of Arizona’s Right-to-Work Law. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Worker Program:

We support a program to fill the shortages of agriculture’s labor needs on a continuing basis, including removing caps on agricultural work visas and where those workers are directed.

We highly support the implementation of a worker program that will allow foreign workers with legal identification to work in the United States.

We support a work program that does not discriminate against any industries requiring foreign labor such as technology, hospitality, farming, and ranching. The requirements and regulations should be the same for all entities. This will increase productivity for all U.S. industries and take the pressure off our border communities and U.S. agencies' involvement.

This program should provide for realistic wage scales and flexibility in providing housing, for example, a stipend in lieu of housing and waiver for close proximity to the border. We oppose the adverse effect wage rate (AEWR).

We believe that the open-ended language in the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker's Protection Act (MSAWPA) holding producers responsible for off-the-farm transportation of seasonal workers be removed and not be repeated in any new legislation that addresses "Worker Program" issues. The practical effects of the language in the MSAWPA renders producers guilty until proven innocent and consequently creates an undue burden on producers and their insurance companies to defend themselves.

Workers are encouraged to learn English. (Amended 2021)

Multi-Year Work Permits:

We support a one-time opportunity for workers currently working but not authorized to work in the U.S. to earn an adjustment of status if they fulfill appropriate prospective work requirements in agriculture. Requirements to be eligible for a three-year temporary work permit should include:

- A clean Record (no criminal charges).
- Have been employed for a minimum of three years.
- A business owner is willing to contract with them.
- Have paid income withholding taxes.
- Any business they operate is properly licensed.

The temporary work permit should be renewable with re-certification of the above conditions. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Labor Needs for Arizona Agriculture:

Farm Bureau supports increasing border security and functional identification documents that are reliably legal and workplace compliant. These are necessary features of homeland security and criminal enforcement of a comprehensive work permit program. Agriculture not only needs access to legal labor, but there must also be an orderly transition to legal labor.

- ***Commuter work permits:***
Many labor-intensive agricultural businesses in close proximity to the Mexican border currently use workers who return to Mexico nightly or weekly. Any federal worker legislation should recognize these commuter workers and their families and the needs of

these businesses by inclusion of provisions which enable and facilitate such work protocol.

Agriculture's needs are often seasonal and concentrated within tight time frames for highly perishable crops. This permit should be renewable, on an unlimited basis, assuming original application criteria were met, and terms of the permit were not violated. These permits should limit workers to agricultural employers but should be portable between employers. The number of permits could initially be established by employer survey requests and later adjusted by the department of labor based on demonstrated usage.

- ***Short-term work permits:***

This permit would provide seasonal labor requirements of longer duration than the daily commuter permit. These short-term worker permits would be valid for up to 12 months and include features that would allow the worker to go home and return legally. It would be renewable, assuming original application criteria were met, and terms of the permit were not violated, and it would limit workers to agricultural employers, but would be portable between employers. These permits should be generated by specific employer request.

- ***Long-term work permits:***

Long-term work permits should be issued. These permits would limit workers to agricultural employers but would be portable between employers and would be generated by specific employer request. (2017)

Employer Rights:

The focus of employers is to employ people and not enforce immigration laws. We oppose the role of employers as immigration enforcers. (Amended 2019)

State Immigration Reform:

We believe that the Arizona legislature should do whatever it can to encourage federal worker program legislation. Immigration policies should be dictated by the federal government and not at state and local levels. The Arizona legislature should not attempt to conduct its own foreign policy by threatening agriculture, construction and other business activities with draconian penalties for employing undocumented workers. We believe that tasking state service and regulatory agencies as policemen in immigration reform is very poor and misguided public policy. All laws that prevent agricultural employers from hiring qualified, hard-working employees should be repealed.

Due to the failure of the federal government to act on agricultural worker reform, we support Arizona's right to formulate its own agricultural worker program. These state worker permits should model the program outlined under Arizona Farm Bureau Policy "Labor Needs for Arizona Agriculture" but would only apply to agricultural work within the state. (2017)

U.S. / Mexico Border Security:

The violence taking place on our border with Mexico has escalated to a point where it can be characterized as terrorism by foreign nationals. Farmers and ranchers on our southern border are in danger for their lives in the course of their daily activities.

Homeland Security must enforce border security and stop all illegal entries into the United States by all means necessary.

We advocate that the current border patrol strategy, effectively allowing high percentages of drug smugglers and undocumented crossers to enter through rural lands and travel in the U.S. for five to 100 miles, must be changed to a specific objective of securing the international border at the border. We also support congressional action to exempt the border patrol from the multi-year delays caused by federal planning and environmental laws that impede construction of infrastructure deemed necessary by the border patrol within a one-mile strip immediately north of and adjacent to the southwestern international boundary in order to secure the border at the border.

We need to secure our United States borders through the following methods. We further support maximum funding for these programs to assist in securing our border:

- Complete fencing or other barriers where possible on U.S. - Mexico border including an adjacent roadway allowing better access for the border patrol and any other agencies to secure the border.
- We support the continued building of the vehicle barrier fence on the on the Mexico Border at the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. The vehicle barrier fence is helping to protect the environment of the national monument from border crossers. In addition, visitors are more willing to visit the monument because of the vehicle barrier fence.
- Department of Homeland Security enforcing and maintaining the barriers on the border.
- Military presence on the border with rules of engagement defined and expanded.
- An emphasis on deploying technology and personnel based on the unique needs of enforcement agencies on a sector by sector basis, including electronic surveillance technology, fixed wing and helicopter and implementation of unmanned aerial systems for night and day surveillance.
- Increased penalties for drug or human trafficking and other illegal entrance into the United States.
- Full communications coverage for civil, law enforcement and military including phone tower construction throughout the border region.
- The use of a virtual fence or other electronic surveillance technology across Ag lands where a physical fence is not practical.
- Operation Stone Garden which would give local law enforcement agencies the technology to work more effectively with border patrol.
- Operation Streamline to process and detain illegal persons through the Department of Justice. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Harmful Union Activities:

We vigorously oppose the tactics used by the leaders of the United Farm Workers (U.F.W.) and other labor unions. The result of these actions causes the loss of extremely perishable agricultural commodities. This method of handling a labor disagreement is not in the public's best interest.

We support Right to Work Laws. Payments of unemployment benefits should be prohibited to persons participating in a labor strike. (Amended 2021)

Union Elections:

United States citizenship and state residency should be prerequisites for voting in union elections. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Public Employee Bargaining:

We favor legislation prohibiting collective bargaining, strikes and work stoppages by public employees. Public employees who participate in work stoppages and strikes should be subject to loss of Civil Service Benefits and/or dismissal. No tax money shall be made available for strikers. (Reaffirmed 2019)

TRADE**USMCA Ratification:**

We support ratification of The United States Mexico Canada Agreement (USMCA). (2020)
(Originated in: Yuma County)

TRANSPORTATION**Implements of Husbandry:**

All portable tanks used by agriculture, including but not limited to fuel storage vehicles, farm chemical tank trailers and weed burners, should be classified as implements of husbandry and therefore be exempt from licensing requirements when moved on public roads. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Transportation Deregulation:

We support the deregulation of all phases of Arizona's transportation industry exclusive of safety and licensing requirements.

We support free and open competition in the interstate and intrastate trucking business including the elimination of the wasteful practice of empty back-hauls.

We support standardized truck and truck equipment inspection within Arizona on which compliance would be recognized by all political jurisdictions within the state. All trucks and equipment passing inspection shall be issued an inspection sticker signifying compliance good for six months. Display of a current sticker shall exempt the truck and truck equipment from routine roadside or spot inspection. Agricultural truck drivers should be exempt from hourly driving restrictions and be allowed to drive enough hours to complete the normal harvest cycle. (2018)

Slow Moving Vehicles:

We recommend all farms be encouraged to place SMV signs on equipment and all blinkers and lights be in working order. (2017)

Safety Awareness Program:

We encourage the continuation and expansion of the AZFB safety training program to increase awareness and avoidance of accidents involving farm equipment on public roadways. (Amended 2020)

Trucking Regulation:

The Arizona Farm Bureau Federation should inform its members regarding the new state and federal trucking regulations as they pertain to agricultural trucking. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Highway User Taxes:

Taxes related to transportation, collected from Arizona's highway users, should be used exclusively for building, and maintaining Arizona's roads and bridges. We believe that tax money allocated for county roads should be used solely in the county area. If roads are to be constructed in and around incorporated areas, the incorporated areas should provide the greater portion of the funds for such projects.

We are opposed to the taking of HURF Funds designated for roads and using them to fund law enforcement or other projects in urban counties. We advocate the continued support of the Casa Grande Accord for allocating funds for rural roadways.

We oppose the use of highway user taxes for the construction of bicycle, pedestrian, equestrian paths or for mass transportation systems. (2018)

Rural Road Improvement Districts:

We support the establishment of Rural Road Improvement Districts (RRID) as authorized by ARS Title 48 (Special Taxing Districts) Article 5. Once established, an RRID should be entitled to a share of Highway Users Revenue Funds (HURF) to fund road development and maintenance in addition to the taxing authority granted in the statute. Furthermore, the State Land Department should be required to cooperate with RRIDs to allow reasonable use of state land in the development of rural roadways.

Within an RRID, if HURF were used and the improved land is removed from agricultural status, the full value of the improvements should be reimbursed to the RRID by the developer. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Highway Beautification:

We favor legislation prohibiting the use of federal monies in Arizona solely for highway beautification projects and new construction contracts. We recommend redirecting these funds for highway maintenance. (Amended 2021)

Grade Separation Structures:

We urge the Arizona Department of Transportation to consider the construction in appropriate locations of grade separation structures adequate to permit crossing of freeways and other highways by farm equipment and livestock. In the agricultural areas the County Farm Bureaus should participate in selection of specific locations for such structures.

Grade separated crossings provide for safe and efficient crossing of railroad tracks at heavy-traffic intersections. We support the continuation of the Arizona Corporation Commission's monitoring of double tracking by the railroad and the assessment of needed grade crossings. When grade separations become necessary due to increased rail traffic, costs of grade separations shall be borne by the railroad and not the local communities. (2018)

Fencing Highways or Roadways:

All existing and future state or county paved roads and highways running through grazing areas shall have a legal fence as defined by ARS 3-1426 constructed and maintained on both sides of these roads and highways by the legal entity having maintenance responsibility of these roads and highways. We support enforcement and penalties for vandalism of fencing on public highways and any public access roads. (Amended 2019)

Littering: +

We support penalties for littering, including restitution for loss of livestock and production or revenue. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Discarded Road Signs:

Construction barriers used by road construction crews and road departments should be picked up following road work. Discarded signs clutter easements create road hazards and make it difficult to move equipment on roadways. (2017)

Survey Markers:

Survey Contractors should be required to remove survey markers in a timely manner after surveying property. Survey companies should pay for damages caused by their markers. (2017)

Rail Lines Through Yuma County:

Any freight coming from ports on the western coast of Baja California should use the most direct route in passing from Baja California into California to connect to Union Pacific's main east/west rail line.

Agricultural areas in Yuma County are highly unsuitable for such a rail line due to food safety, air quality, and transportation issues. Such a rail line passing through established agricultural areas would also negatively affect existing farms, homes, and businesses, and would denigrate quality of life and property values in those areas. As such, Arizona Farm Bureau is adamantly opposed to any new rail lines crossing through or in close proximity to agricultural areas of Yuma County. Double tracking of the railway should not impact the Yuma Territorial Prison or other historical sites. (Amended 2019)

ADOT Wilderness Corridor Program:

We oppose ADOT's wilderness corridor program. (2017)

DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES

Agriculture License Plates:

We support agriculture license plates issued by the Arizona Department of Motor Vehicles with a clear definition of eligibility. We support the inclusion of any and all farm, agriculture business, custom harvesting, manure spreaders, agriculture product haulers, and all agricultural related hauling under the definition for eligibility for agricultural plates. (Amended 2021)

AZ Commercial Drivers' License:

The conditions of use of the agriculture Commercial Driver's License (CDL) exemption should be extended to the greater of the entire state boundaries or the current 150-mile limit.

We support CDL drivers being eligible for the Arizona Defensive Driving Program as a means to dismiss traffic tickets when the violation occurs while operating a non-commercial vehicle. (2021)

Driver's License Issuance:

We oppose any law that prohibits possession of a valid driver license until the age of 18 years. (2017)

Farm/Ranch Truck License:

We support legislation to establish a farm/ranch license truck rate, which would be based on assessed value rather than on weight for vehicles used in the production/marketing of foods, fibers, and ornamental plants. (2019)

Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations:

There should be no restrictions, record keeping or notification as to quantities or types of vehicles in which fuel, agriculture chemicals, or fertilizers are transported, when used in a normal agriculture manner. Furthermore, we believe that farm vehicle drivers as defined in the Federal Motor Carrier Safety regulations be exempt from the driver qualifications when transporting production inputs while conducting normal agricultural operations.

We further believe that law enforcement officers should be restricted from attempting to conduct comprehensive commercial vehicle safety inspections unless they are qualified to do so. There are at least five levels of commercial vehicle inspection.

Commercial vehicle citations should only be issued by officers that have received the necessary technical training and have been appropriately certified to conduct the level of safety inspection necessary to write a legal citation. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Pro-rated Commercial Vehicle Fee:

We support pro-rating commercial license fees for vehicles used for only a portion of the year. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Wide Load Permits:

We support legislation that would allow wide load permits to be intact even when a permittee leaves and returns to the state within the time the permit allows. (2017)

Truck Weight Limits:

We support increasing truck weight limits to 96,000 pounds. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Fuel-Use Permit Charge:

We support legislation that would repeal the fuel-use permit charged Arizona registered heavy trucks as they enter the state. (2017)

Truck Safety:

We recommend that all commercial trucks using Arizona highways, regardless of country of registration, be required to meet federal and state safety requirements for drivers and equipment. (2017)

Mexico Entry Inspection:

We support legislation requiring all persons and vehicles entering Mexico to be inspected by U.S. border guards to verify the ownership of all vehicles and cargo before allowing them to pass into Mexico. (2017)

HEALTH, EDUCATION AND WELFARE

Health Insurance:

We oppose mandated health insurance. (Reaffirmed 2021)

School Districts:

We recommend that school districts remain under local control, and only be reorganized by a vote of the residents of those districts involved.

We strongly urge Farm Bureau members to run for local boards of education.

School districts should make provisions to allow students time off from school to participate in their county fair and 4-H and FFA Expos. (Amended 2020)

Evolution Theory:

We urge that evolution be taught in public schools as a theory rather than as a fact and include scientific evidence that is contrary to the theory. If one theory on how the earth was formed is taught in schools, then other theories and related scientific evidence must be presented. (Amended 2021)

Vocational Agriculture Programs:

We strongly support vocational agriculture programs and the FFA. We will encourage every high school district to have an FFA program. We should work with all other state agriculture groups to promote the vocational agriculture programs and the FFA.

Full time executive and support staff should be funded by the state. When hiring a new executive secretary, members of the agricultural community should be involved in the screening and interviewing process. (Amended 2020)

Career and Technical Education and Career and Technical Education District Funding: +
We continue to support the funding of Career and Technical Education District programs and other Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. We are opposed to using those funds for anything other than the intended purpose. (Amended 2021)

Teaching:

We strongly advocate a return to not only teaching the basic educational skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, but also an introduction to trade and vocational skills at all levels of education.

We support the legislative mandate for teaching of a free enterprise course at the secondary level. (Amended 2020)

Agriculture Teacher Shortage:

We recognize that there is an extreme shortage of qualified Agricultural Education teachers entering the teaching profession on the state and national level. We will work closely with the State Supervisor of Agricultural Education, the Arizona Department of Education, the Arizona Agriculture Teachers Association and the University of Arizona Department of Agricultural Education on initiatives that promote the recruitment and retention of quality teachers of Agricultural Education and FFA advisors. We will support state and national efforts already in place to address this issue being undertaken by the National FFA Organization, the National Association of Agricultural Educators, and the National Council for Agricultural Education. We will investigate new ways to address this problem in Arizona and we will allocate financial resources where helpful. (2018)

Agriculture Education:

We support efforts to promote accurate scientific information on the positive effects of agriculture to be incorporated into all education curriculums. Agricultural education needs to include environmental and conservation education. (Amended 2020)

School Lunches:

We support the use of balanced, nutritious, and affordable school lunches and support the utilization of Arizona agriculture products where available. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Requirements for Medical License:

We urge Arizona to require a course in the diagnosis of and treatment for the exposure to pesticides and fertilizers as a prerequisite for the issuance of a medical license.

We urge Arizona to establish educational requirements in diet and nutrition for the issuance of a medical license. (Amended 2021)

Veterinary Training:

We support veterinary training and certification program in the state of Arizona to help alleviate the shortage of large animal veterinarians in the state. (2017)

Cooperative Extension:

We strongly support the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Service. We ask our state legislature to fund the University of Arizona at levels that allow adequate funding to support cooperative extension.

As Arizona grows in suburban areas cooperative extension has met and continues to provide programs for suburbia as well as rural Arizona.

We strongly urge the state to provide the funding that allows the University of Arizona to fill vacant cooperative extension agent positions throughout the state. (2018)

Research:

Research is essential for agriculture to keep up in the technological frontier. As the nature of farming and ranching continues to change as a result of economics, political and regulatory changes, a renewed emphasis must be placed on research. Emphasis should be placed on applied research, particularly on changing cropping patterns and high value crops, and rotational grazing methods on rangelands. Additionally, we should work with the universities and community colleges of Arizona in identifying and conducting other needed agricultural research in areas such as:

1. Biotechnology in all areas of production;
2. Expanded uses of existing crops;
3. Research on less labor-intensive crops;
4. Ways to expand and/or make use of mechanical harvesting; and
5. Vegetable, citrus and nursery crops in areas where expanded production of these crops is expected.
6. Invasive woody species encroaching on rangelands. (2018)

Unemployment and Welfare Benefits:

We support legislation limiting the period of time that persons may receive unemployment or welfare benefits, and that the amount of such benefits shall not exceed the national minimum wage scale.

The use of WIC coupons at farmers' markets should not be limited to vegetables, fruits, and grains, but also include meat, poultry, and dairy.

Non-citizens of the United States should not receive unemployment benefits while not living in the United States.

Undocumented aliens should not receive unemployment benefits.

Recipients must pass a drug test in order to obtain benefits. (Amended 2021)

Unemployment Tax:

We support raising the minimum quarterly wage level at which an employer is required to pay unemployment tax from \$20,000 to \$40,000. We favor the adoption of an unemployment tax formula that will keep pace with current wages paid. (Amended 2021)

School Financing:

We are in favor of local control of school systems. (Amended 2020)

INSURANCE

Automobile Insurance:

We support the law requiring proof of bodily injury (BI) and property damage (PD) insurance coverage before an automobile may be licensed to operate on the streets, roads and highways of Arizona. We encourage the strengthening of this law so that fewer uninsured drivers will be on the road. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Tort and Insurance Reform:

We support tort reform at the state level that would require the non-prevailing party in lawsuits to bear the costs of litigation. (2017)

Pro-rated Insurance:

We support insurance companies pro-rating for occasional use vehicles. (Reaffirmed 2021)

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Farm Bill:

We should work cohesively with other agricultural organizations addressing the needs of Arizona agriculture, while working on the next Farm Bill.

The Farm Bill should expand the market access program to include specialty crops; this sector should have funding for the mitigation, eradication and recovery strategies regarding invasive pests, and research funding for integrated projects that combine research, extension and education. (Amended 2021)

Tell Agriculture's Story:

Arizona Farm Bureau will regularly build a strategy around public outreach and engagement to help the general public understand modern agriculture.

We shall partner with related organizations (including other agriculture and commodity-specific groups) and agencies to establish outreach programs and specific legislation in the best interest of Arizona agriculture. The public should be more thoroughly informed of agriculture's role in the economy and welfare of our community and nation. As a result, we support any form of agriculture, including agri-tourism and agribusiness, in Arizona that helps educate the public through on-site experiences about agriculture.

We support ongoing studies that adequately quantify agriculture's economic benefit to the state. And once such studies have completed data, a concerted and robust effort shall be made to inform the public through various channels of outreach including social media and any other form of public engagement.

Where appropriate, government relations and outreach will strategically align efforts, especially on behalf of "priority issues" established by farm bureau's delegate body. When a public issue surfaces that would be harmful to the agriculture industry's wellbeing, we will develop a multimedia outreach campaign to promote the activities and positions of the agriculture community. Such a campaign will be executed through the formation of a committee comprised of all agricultural commodity groups in order to obtain grants and other funding to educate and promote the agriculture community's position regarding the issue. (Amended 2019)

Education for Water Conservation:

Farm Bureau and other agricultural organizations should join to educate the citizens of our communities on the efficient use of water in today's production of food, fiber and horticulture products. (2018)

Public Relations:

The Arizona Farm Bureau Federation shall continue its public relations efforts. Funds and resources may be allocated to support public relations efforts of the Arizona Farm Bureau Board of Directors. (2017)

WITHIN FARM BUREAU

Ag in the Classroom:

Farm Bureau shall continue to support and further expand the Ag in the Classroom program. Further, we encourage Arizona Farm Bureau to continue its support of the Summer Ag Institute. (2018)

Consumer Education:

We encourage the Arizona Farm Bureau staff to continue and enhance advertising campaigns that assist counties in educating consumers concerning Arizona's agriculture.

We support animal-based meat and dairy consumption education at all levels of education.

We encourage active education of consumers on the use and importance of agricultural chemicals.

We encourage active education of consumers on the use and importance of genetically modified crops through Ag in the Classroom and related educational material. (Amended 2021)

Reward Program:

Arizona Farm Bureau should investigate a statewide crime prevention program featuring substantial rewards for anyone who provides information leading to arrest and conviction of a

person who committed a crime on the property of or against a Farm Bureau member. (Amended 2020)

Litigation Fund:

Farm Bureau supports teaming up with other agricultural organizations in Arizona and any other state (i.e. New Mexico, Texas, Colorado, etc.) That would like to participate in creating a litigation fund that would enable these organizations to litigate against agencies like the EPA and USDA when faced with unreasonable sanctions and/or regulations. (2018)

Political Action Committee:

We will continue the Arizona Farm Bureau Federation Political Action Committee. We support Farm Bureau promoting and meeting the criteria for a Super PAC. (Reaffirmed 2019)

Lifetime Membership:

We support the continuation of an endowment fund to benefit the Arizona Educational Farming Company, wherein a one-time donation of \$5,000 would insure to the donor:

1. Annual Farm Bureau membership dues for the life of the donor; and
2. A one-time tax deduction of \$5,000 for income tax purposes.

Any earnings of the endowment fund in excess of membership dues would be used at the discretion of the governing board of the Arizona Educational Farming Company. If annual earnings are less than membership dues, the balance owing will be deducted from the endowment fund. Upon the death of the donor, the total endowment would be used for the benefit of the Educational Farming Company. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Leadership Training:

We, with other farm organizations, will continue to support training programs for farmers and agribusiness members. The purpose of this training is to prepare speakers and evaluators to appear at hearings, legislative meetings, TV shows, civic clubs, and public functions to represent the farm and ranch side of agricultural issues. (Amended 2021)

Project CENTRL:

As Project CENTRL is the premiere rural leadership program in Arizona, Arizona Farm Bureau and the various county Farm Bureaus should strive to maintain a high level of involvement and commitment to Project CENTRL. We encourage members to apply for the program to assist them in improving and expanding their leadership skills. We encourage individual or group financial support. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Water Committee:

The Arizona Farm Bureau officers and staff are directed to maintain our water committee to address developing issues on water policy, both state and federal. The water committee should review actions and policies affecting agriculture in the state of Arizona. (Reaffirmed 2020)

Women in Ag Conference:

The Arizona Farm Bureau Federation will support the Women in Ag Conference with advance publicity, financial support and coverage of the event. (2017)

ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Annual Meeting:

We direct the Arizona Farm Bureau officers and staff to conduct the annual meeting in no more than two consecutive days. Policy development shall be conducted in one day. (Reaffirmed 2021)

Statewide Office Holder Vacancy:

If there is a vacancy in our statewide office holders, the current officer may move up to fill respective positions, and the board will have the authority to fill the unexpired term. (Reaffirmed 2021)

President Expenses:

We will pay all the expenses of the Arizona Farm Bureau President, including travel, lodging and meals when on assignment for the Arizona Farm Bureau. (2017)

Five Year Policies:

The policies herein remain in force for a period of five years unless amended or reaffirmed. The date following each policy statement is the year it originated, was amended, or was reaffirmed as Arizona Farm Bureau policy. Arizona Farm Bureau policy books are made available to all members upon request.

Policy Development Committee Reports:

We direct the officers and staff of the Arizona Farm Bureau to publish the annual meeting policy committee report and send it to each county not less than seven days prior to the annual meeting.

Procedure for Late Resolutions:

Late resolutions are those resolutions, which address an issue that has surfaced in the time period between the county policy development process ending with the County Annual Meeting and the State Annual Meeting. Late resolutions shall be introduced from the floor by a voting delegate at the Open Reading of the resolution's session of the State Annual Meeting.

A written copy of the resolution shall be furnished to the State Resolutions Committee.

After presentation of late resolutions, the State Resolutions Committee shall meet to determine if these resolutions meet the criteria of solving a problem which has surfaced late in the policy development process. Those resolutions that meet this test will be included in the State Resolutions Committee Report offered to the voting delegates. The committee shall return those resolutions, which do not meet the test, to the sponsor.

Late resolutions may also be introduced from the floor by a voting delegate at the Open Reading of Resolutions Committee Report during the policy session of the State Annual Meeting. One hundred copies of the proposed resolution shall be furnished to the delegate body. The body shall determine if the resolution shall be included in the Resolutions Committee Report and proceed accordingly with the policy session. (Amended 2021)

INDEX

A

Active Management Areas	26, 30, 31
Adjudication	29
ADOT Wilderness Corridor Program	91
Aerial Images.....	81
Affirmation of States Water Rights	27
Aflatoxin.....	55
Ag Certainty	74
Ag Economic Development.....	68
Ag in the Classroom	97
Ag Preference Power	42
Agricultural Chemicals.....	46
Agricultural Grazing Land Property Tax.....	72
Agricultural Inspection Stations	53
Agricultural Products.....	68
Agricultural Protection Act.....	7
Agricultural Status and Exemptions	72
Agricultural Status for Property Tax Assessment.....	71
agricultural tax classification.....	71
Agricultural Valuation for Small Farms	70
Agricultural Warranties	77
Agriculture Education.....	94
Agriculture license plates	92
agriculture preservation districts.....	9
Agriculture Teacher Shortage.....	94
Air and Water Quality Regulations Consolidation	42
Air Inspector Education.....	42
Air Pollution Controls	41
Air Quality.....	42
Airports and Military Air Bases	9
AMA.....	30, 31, 38
Animal Care.....	58
Animal Disease Lab.....	61
Animal Reproduction (Pet and Livestock)	58
Animal Rights.....	57
Animal Welfare	59
Annexation	8
Annual Meeting	99
APS Rate Change	44
Argentina Citrus	55
Arizona Corporation Commission	44, 80, 91
Arizona Department of Agriculture.....	7, 47, 48, 53, 64, 75, 76, 77
Arizona Department of Motor Vehicles	92
Arizona Game and Fish Department	15, 26, 74
Arizona Grain Council.....	69
Arizona Groundwater Protection List.....	47
Arizona Income Tax Returns.....	74
Arizona Initiative Process.....	84
Arizona Power Authority.....	42
Arizona Racetrack Gaming Policy	73
Arizona's Rights.....	3

Augmenting Arizona Water Supplies:	31
Automobile Insurance.....	96
AZ Commercial Drivers' License.....	92
AZMET Program.....	81
B	
Bark Beetle	12
Beef Checkoff Fee.....	64
Bees In Agriculture.....	55
best management practices	23, 41
Biological Control of Navel Orangeworm.....	55
Biotechnology Regulation	77
Blister Beetle	54
Boarding Stable Feed Liens.....	65
border security	13, 86, 88
Brackish Water	31
Brand Inspection.....	62
Brand Recording Policy.....	62
Buffer Zones	49
C	
Carcass Beef Grading Standards	63
Career and Technical Education District	94
CDL	92
Cell Phone Towers.....	81
Central Arizona Groundwater Replenishment District (CAGRD)	33
Central Arizona Project	32, 33
Certified Nurseries.....	78
Citrus Canker.....	54
Citrus Disease Research	54
City Regional Plans	6
Clean Up Public Lands.....	19
Clean Water Act - Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations.....	40
Coal Energy.....	43
Code of the West	5
Commodity Promotion	67
Compensation for Victims.....	83
Compliance and Federal Funding	81
Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations.....	40
Condemned Property	8
Conservation Easements.....	4
Consumer Education.....	97
Controlled Substances for Veterinary Use.....	60
Cooperative Extension.....	95
Corn Borer.....	54
Cost Plus Contracting	85
Cotton Remnant Destruction and Pest Management	55
Country of Origin Labeling	53
County Authority	84
County Board of Supervisors.....	44
County Departments of Environmental Quality	45
County Fair.....	77
Court Compensation	83
Critical Habitat Designation	23
Crop Protection.....	49
Cultural/Archaeological Clearances	16

D

Definition of a Farm	70
Department of Agriculture.....	24, 47, 53, 55, 62, 64, 68, 76, 77
Department of Interior Reorganization.....	10
Department of Water Resources	8, 27, 28, 30, 32, 34, 38
Development of Harquahala Water Basin	35
Discarded Road Signs.....	91
District Voting Policy	43
Documentation of Injury/Pesticide Complaints.....	48
Domesticated Animals.....	58
Driver's License Issuance.....	92
Drought.....	38, 71
Drought Contingency Plan	38
Drug Education and Enforcement	83

E

Education of Water Conservation.....	97
Elected Officials	85
Election Activities	84
Elections	84
Electrical Districts	43
Employer Rights.....	87
endangered species	21, 23, 56, 58
Endangered Species.....	20
Energy Sources.....	43
Enforcement of Federal Officer Ethics.....	82
Environmental Law	82
Environmental Regulation.....	45
Equestrian Property Use and Regulations	65
Equine Facilities	65
Equine Massage and Dentistry	64
Equine Processing.....	65
Equine Rescue Registry.....	64
Equine Training for Peace Officers	65
Equine Usage Fees.....	65
Estate and Capital Gains Tax.....	74
Evolution Theory	93

F

Fallowing Land During Drought	38
Farm and Ranch Liability Protection Policy.....	83
Farm Bill.....	96
Farm Bureau Beliefs.....	2
Farm Programs	66
Farm/Ranch Truck License.....	92
FDA Advisories.....	51
Federal Improvement Fees	11
Federal Land	11
Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund	15
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations	92
Feed Additives and Hormones.....	60
Feed Liens	65
fence out laws	17
Fence-Out Law	17
Fencing Highways or Roadways	91

Feral Horses and Burros	64
Feral Swine	26
Firearms	82
Fiscal Responsibility	85
Five Year Policies	99
Flood Control and Dam Safety	34
Flood Plain Condemnation	8
Food Quality Protection Act	49
Food Quality Standards for raw and fresh-cut fruits and vegetables	51
Food Safety Depredation Hunts	25
Forbearance	34
Foreign Animal Disease	61
Forest Management	11
Forest Service Stumpage Fees	16
Form 1080	47
Formation of Rangeland Fire Protection Associations	15
Four Forest Restoration	15
Frivolous Lawsuits	84
Fruit And Vegetable Standardization	67
Fuel-Use Permit Charge	93
Fund Sweeps	77
 G	
General Adjudication	29
Genetically Modified	53, 97
Goats and Goat Products	65
Good Agricultural Practices	51, 52
Government Payment of Contractors	85
Government Taxes and Spending	70
Governmental Land Use Planning	6
GPS Band	81
Grade Separation Structures	90
Grain Ethanol	44
Grain Inspection Packers and Stockyards Administration	78
Grandfathered Rights	31, 32
Grazing Permits	15
Grazing Permits and Wildfires	15
Green Infrastructure	46
Groundwater	27, 29, 37, 40
Groundwater Management Areas	30
Groundwater Withdrawal Fees	31
Grower Information Program	49
Guest Worker Program	85, 86
 H	
Harmful Union Activities	88
Hay Standards	78
Hazardous Waste Disposal	79
Health Insurance	93
Healthy Forest Initiative	11
Hemp	69
Heritage Fund	74
Highway Beautification	90
Highway User Taxes	90
Hoof And Mouth Disease	61
Human Trafficking and Slave Trade	84

Hunting.....	24, 25
Hunting Blinds on Stock Ponds.....	25
Hunting Within City Limits.....	25

I

Illegal Dumping.....	79
Impaired Water.....	40
Implements of Husbandry.....	89
Imported Agricultural Products	52
Improvement Districts	7, 81, 90
Indirect Recharge.....	32
Industrial Hemp	69
Industrial Water Permits for Agriculture	32
Interregional Research Project #4 (IR-4).....	51
Interstate Commerce of Meat Products	63
Invasive Plants.....	57
Irrigation.....	27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 38, 39, 42, 43, 44, 56, 57, 84
Irrigation Districts.....	27, 30, 33, 84
Irrigation Non-Expansion Area	31

K

Karnal Bunt	78
-------------------	----

L

Labeling.....	53
Labeling Of Genetically Modified Foods.....	53
Labor	85, 86
Labor Needs For Arizona Agriculture	86
Lake Powell.....	35
Land Use Planning.....	5
Law Enforcement Funding	82
Leadership Training.....	98
Legal Access.....	20
Legislative Districts.....	85
Lending Institutions.....	69
Liaison with Agriculture Commodity Organizations.....	67
License.....	92
Lifetime Membership	98
Limited Liability of Irrigation Districts	84
Litigation Fund.....	98
Littering	91
Livestock Grazing.....	16, 24, 36, 37
Livestock Health.....	59
Livestock Inspection for Show Animals.....	63
Livestock Sale	63
Livestock Traceability	60
Local Beef	64
Low-Head Hydro Power.....	44

M

Mail Delivery.....	82
Man-Made Lakes and Reservoirs	35
Medfly Trapping.....	54
Methane Emissions.....	41
Mexican Gray Wolf.....	21

Mexico Entry Inspection	93
Milk Pricing and Dairy Cooperatives	66
Mineral Rights	7
Mobile Communication	81
Mosquito Abatement	54
Mountain Standard Time	79
Multiple Use of Public Lands	10
Multi-Year Work Permits	86
Municipal Water Transfers	31

N

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)	10
National Monument	11, 88
National Veterinary Stockpile	60
Native American Water	29
Native Plant Licensing and Removal on State Trust Land	20
Native Species Introduction	56
Natural Disasters	82
Natural Resource Conservation Districts	9
Navigable Stream Designation	36
NEPA	10, 14, 37
Non-Ambulatory Animal Handling	59
Non--Taxpayer Office Holders	85
Notification of Adjacent Agricultural Use	5
NRCS	9, 40

O

Off-Road Vehicles and Non-Motorized Trails	19
Organic Standards	53

P

Particulate Air Pollution	41
Permits	6, 11, 12, 15, 19, 25, 27, 32, 44, 65, 76, 77, 87, 92
Personal Property Tax	72
Pesticide	47
Pesticide Applicators and Safety Training	48
Pesticide Complaints	48
pesticides	46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 53, 56, 94
Pesticides	46
Petroleum Refinery	44
Phytosanitary Inspections	53
Plant and Animal Sanitation and Residue Testing	57
Policy Development Committee Reports	99
Political Action Committee	98
Possessory Interest Tax	73
Power Line Siting, Rights of Way	44
Power Marketing Administrations	44
Prairie Dogs	26
Prepass	54
Prescribed Burns	14
Preservation of Farmland	4
President Expenses	99
Priority Lien	70
Procedure for Late Resolutions	99
Project CENTRL	98
Proof of Citizenship	77

Property Lien Release.....	80
Property Rights.....	3
Property Tax Classification and Water Reductions.....	71
Pro-rated Commercial Vehicle Fee.....	92
Pro--rated Insurance.....	96
Protection of Non-Traditional Crops.....	53
Pro-Tem Judges.....	84
Public Employee Bargaining.....	89
Public Events Liability.....	83
Public Funding Of Campaigns.....	84
Public Land Access.....	16
Public Land Improvements.....	16
Public Relations.....	96, 97
Puncture Vine (Bullhead).....	57
Purpose of Farm Bureau.....	2

R

Rail Lines Through Yuma County.....	91
Ranching for Wildlife.....	25
Range Management Education.....	16
Recharge.....	32
reclaimed water.....	26, 32
Reclaimed Water.....	32
Recognition of Equine Industry.....	64
Regulatory Action Plan Penalties.....	75
Regulatory Compliance Inspections.....	80
Regulatory Reform.....	75
Regulatory Rules and Enforcement.....	45
renewable energy.....	43
Requirements for Medical License.....	94
Research.....	95
Reservation Expansion.....	7
Retail Agriculture.....	52
Reward Program.....	97
Rights of Way.....	44, 56
Right--to--Work.....	85
Riparian Areas.....	36
Rural Road Improvement Districts.....	90

S

Safe Use of Pesticides.....	49
Safety Awareness Program.....	90
Sales and Use Tax.....	73
Salt Cedar Biocontrol Research.....	56
Sanitary Landfills.....	79
Satellite and Aerial Images.....	81
Scale Certification.....	79
School Districts.....	93
School Financing.....	96
School Lunches.....	94
Screwworm.....	54
Section 8 Memorandum of Understanding.....	10
Seed Mediation.....	78
Severance Taxes.....	73
Slow Moving Vehicles.....	89
Small Ag Systems.....	40

Small Processing Capacity	63
Soil Chemical Tolerance Levels and Clean-Up.....	49
Sonoran Desert Tortoise	23
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher.....	23
Special Local Needs	48
Special Use Labels for Agricultural Chemicals.....	48
Specialty Crop Insurance	66
State Immigration Reform	87
State Income Taxes.....	73
State Land Leases	18
State of Origin Labeling	52
State Power Line Siting Committee.....	44
State Property Tax on Real Property	70
State Sovereignty Over Public Lands	3
State Trust Land Access Protocol.....	17
State Trust Lands	17
Statewide Office Holder Vacancy	99
Stock Waters.....	16
Support for The Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management.....	76
Surface Water Entitlement.....	27
Surface Waters.....	30
Survey Markers	91
Sustainable Agriculture	69
Sweet Orange Scab.....	55
Synthetic/Imitation Meat Products	52

T

Tax Base Protection.....	72
Tax Credit Classification	74
Tax credits	74
Teaching	94
Tele-Veterinary Practices	60
Tell Ag Story	96
Terrorism	82
Tort and Insurance Reform.....	96
Trails.....	7
Transportation.....	89
Transportation of Equine	65
Trespass Laws	7
Trichomoniasis	61
Truck Safety	93
Truck Weight Limits	93
Trucking Regulation	90
Type I Right.....	31

U

U.S. / Mexico Border Security	87
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	14, 23, 26, 37
Unemployment and Welfare Benefits.....	95
Unemployment Tax	96
Union	88, 89, 91
Union Elections	89
Union Pacific	91
United States' Sovereignty	81
University of Arizona Campus Agricultural Center and the Food Product and Safety Laboratory	63
Upper Gila Water Issues.....	35

Urban Conservation.....	37
USDA	51, 56, 78
USMCA Ratification	89
Utilization of Colorado River Allocation	33

V

Value Added Marketing	69
Veterinarian Procedures	60
Veterinary Training	94
Vineyards and Wineries.....	68
Vocational Agriculture Programs	93

W

Water Committee.....	98
Water Conservation During Drought.....	38
Water Conservation Efforts	35
Water Conservation Programs.....	37
Water Measuring Devices.....	37
Water Quality	39
Water Retention Structures.....	30
Water Rights	26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 33, 35, 36, 37
Water Rights For Protected Farm Land	28
Water Testing	40
Water Transfers	31
Weather Information.....	81
Weather Management.....	30
Weed And Pest Abatement.....	56
Weed Control In Waterways	57
Weed Resistance.....	56
Western Area Power Administration.....	42
Whitefly	54
Wide Load Permits	92
Wild And Scenic Rivers	36
Wilderness Area	34
Wilderness Corridor	91
Wildfire Management.....	12
Wildlife Crop And Rangeland Damage.....	24
Wildlife Grazing Fee	25
Wildlife Management	23
Wildlife Pest And Predator Control.....	26
Winery Cap Distribution	68
Women In Ag Conference	99
Work Permits.....	86, 87
Worker Protection Standard Testing.....	48
World Crop Reporting	68

Z

zoning	5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Zoning And Subdivisions Permits	6
Zoning Use By Right.....	7



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