

# 2021-2022 Policy Book



## Table of Contents

1.	PURPOSE OF FARM BUREAU .....	5
2.	FARM BUREAU BELIEFS .....	5
3.	AGLAND LEASES .....	5
4.	AGLAND PRESERVATION .....	6
5.	AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION.....	7
6.	AGRI-TOURISM.....	7
7.	BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES .....	7
8.	BIODEGRADABLE PACKAGING .....	7
9.	BIODIESEL .....	7
10.	CHECK-OFFS .....	7
11.	CORN/SORGHUM YIELDS .....	8
12.	CROP INSURANCE .....	8
13.	DEER .....	8
14.	DELAWARE COSTAL ZONE ACT .....	9
15.	DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.....	9
16.	DIESEL FUEL .....	9
17.	DISPARAGEMENT OF AGRICULTURE PRODUCTS .....	9
18.	DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE .....	9
19.	DUES .....	9
20.	EDUCATION .....	10
21.	ELECTRICAL SERVICE.....	10
22.	EMINENT DOMAIN .....	10
23.	ENDANGERED SPECIES .....	10
24.	ENERGY .....	10
25.	FARM TAGS.....	11
26.	FARM TRUCKS.....	11
27.	FARMLAND ASSESSMENT .....	12
28.	FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE.....	12
29.	FIREARMS.....	12
30.	FOREIGN LAND OWNERSHIP .....	12
31.	FORESTRY .....	12
32.	FRESHWATER WETLANDS .....	12
33.	GENETICALLY ENHANCED ORGANISMS.....	12
34.	GOVERNMENT CONTROL .....	13
35.	GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON AGRICULTURE .....	13
36.	GRAIN DISCOUNTING.....	13
37.	GRAIN SHIPPING-INSPECTION-STORAGE .....	13
38.	GROUNDWATER .....	13

39.	HEALTH CARE AND COST .....	13
40.	HEMP .....	14
41.	HIGHWAYS .....	14
42.	IMPACT FEES .....	14
43.	IMPORT LIMITS .....	14
44.	AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION AGENT .....	14
45.	LAND COMPENSATION .....	14
46.	LAND GRANT COLLEGES.....	14
47.	LAND USE.....	14
48.	LANDFILL AREAS .....	15
49.	LAW ENFORCEMENT .....	15
50.	LEGAL FEES .....	15
51.	LOW INTEREST LOANS .....	15
52.	MANURE STORAGE STRUCTURES.....	15
53.	MARKETING AND GOVERNMENT .....	15
54.	MEDICARE ASSIGNMENT .....	16
55.	NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL .....	16
56.	NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT .....	16
57.	ORGANIZED LABOR.....	17
58.	PARKS AND RECREATION.....	17
59.	PESTICIDES .....	17
60.	POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS.....	17
61.	POTASH TARIFF .....	17
62.	POULTRY .....	18
63.	PRECISION AG EQUIPMENT PURCHASING PROGRAM .....	18
64.	PRESERVING AGRICULTURAL BUSINESSES .....	18
65.	PROPERTY ASSESSMENT.....	18
66.	PUBLIC RELATIONS .....	18
67.	RECYCLING.....	18
68.	REGULATION OF NITRATES.....	19
69.	RIGHT TO FARM.....	19
70.	RIGHT-OF-WAY .....	19
71.	RISK-BENEFIT ANALYSIS ON LAWS & REGULATIONS .....	20
72.	SAFETY .....	21
73.	SCHOOL TAXES.....	21
74.	SEED.....	21
75.	SLOW MOVING VEHICLES.....	21
76.	SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY .....	21
77.	STATE AND FEDERAL REGULATORY AGENCIES .....	21

78.	STATE RESOURCE AREA MAPS.....	22
79.	TAKING OF PRIVATE PROPERTY .....	22
80.	TAXES.....	22
81.	TECHNOLOGY FEES .....	23
82.	TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS .....	23
83.	TRANSFER TAX .....	24
84.	TRESPASSING .....	24
85.	VANDALISM AND THEFT.....	24
86.	WASTEWATER SPRAY IRRIGATION.....	24
87.	WATER .....	24
88.	WELFARE.....	25
89.	WILDLIFE.....	25
90.	YOUNG FARMERS & RANCHERS .....	25
91.	ZONING .....	25

### 1. PURPOSE OF FARM BUREAU

Delaware Farm Bureau is a free, independent, non-governmental, voluntary organization of farm, ranch, and fishing families united for the purpose of analyzing their problems and formulating action to achieve educational improvement, economic opportunity, and social advancement and, thereby, to promote the national well-being. Farm Bureau is local, statewide, national, and international in its scope and influence, and is non-partisan, non-sectarian, and non-secret in character.

### 2. FARM BUREAU BELIEFS

America's unparalleled progress is based on freedom and dignity of the individual, sustained by basic moral and religious concepts.

Economic progress, cultural advancement, and 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 upon government power; in maintenance of equal opportunity; in the right of each individual to freedom of worship; in separation of church and state; and in freedom of speech, press, and peaceful assembly.

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 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 contributions to society; and to save, invest, spend, and convey earnings to heirs. Each person has the responsibility to meet financial obligations incurred.

Our policy states that a man's or woman's farm and home are their property and that private property rights of the owner (s) are granted by the Constitution of the United States.

### 3. AGLAND LEASES

Delaware Farm Bureau supports the requirement that, when there is an exchange of property, the seller of such property must inform the buyer of the tenant's rights under Delaware Code 6702.

(2018) Delaware Farm Bureau supports a bonus on the total score when considering bids by farms residing in the state of Delaware.

#### 4. **AGLAND PRESERVATION**

We support and call for the American Farm Bureau to seek Federal legislation preventing the use of Federal funds for the depletion of farmland areas where lower levels of local government have caused districts to be created for Farmland Preservation.

Delaware Farm Bureau was supportive of the Delaware Aglands Preservation Foundation's rules which were initially introduced. However, the Foundation has decided to change the rules and designate up to 75% of their money to priority areas of within a three-mile radius of town limits. A program participant who does not live in the priority area may never have an opportunity during their ten-year period to sell their development rights to the Foundation. There is no mention of participants being able to withdraw from the program if they do not agree with the rule changes. Delaware Farm Bureau supports that farmers should be allowed to have the option of leaving the program before the ten years are up due to the change in rules that occurred without consent of its participants.

(2015) Delaware Farm Bureau is supportive of the Delaware Agricultural Lands Preservation Program

Delaware Farm Bureau supports landowners having the option of leaving the Ag District due to program changes.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports the use of "highest and best use" appraisal practices.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports permanent funding for the Delaware Agricultural Preservation Program.

Delaware Farm Bureau encourages policies that preserve farmland in a fair and equitable manner.

The Delaware Farm Bureau supports a bond offering to enhance the Agricultural Preservation Program.

The Delaware Farm Bureau recommends the following:

- Encourage the Installment Purchase Agreement (IPA) is used as a tool to preserve farms.
- Supports full-funding to reduce the discount rate
- Create a new program to assist farmers making purchase of farmland, including allowing three party purchases of land with the seller going to settlement with a qualified buyer and the DFLF. (similar to YF&R program)
- Set aside or create a revolving fund used to take immediate action to preserve or protect farmland

## **5. AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION**

Delaware Farm Bureau supports that each school district in the State of Delaware continue to support Agricultural Education by filling all vacancies of vocational agriculture teachers.

## **6. AGRI-TOURISM**

(2013) Delaware Farm Bureau supports legislation that would exempt agri-tourism professionals from liability for injury or death of a participant as a result from participation in any agri-tourism activities.

(2013) Delaware Farm Bureau calls for no participant or participant's representative to maintain any action against an agri-tourism professional for injury, loss, damage or death as a result of participating in any agri-tourism activity.

(2019) Delaware Farm Bureau supports specific State Legislation to clearly protect agritourism operators from frivolous lawsuits.

## **7. BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES**

Delaware Farm Bureau supports keeping the Best Management Practices Program on a voluntary basis.

Farmers work with many government agencies when installing Best Management Practices such as manure storage, drainage pipes, and manure pits, which are engineered, installed, inspected and approved by government personnel.

When government agencies inspect and find violations of these Best Management Practices, Delaware Farm Bureau feels that part of the financial and corrective responsibility should be accepted by those who previously engineered, installed, inspected and approved these systems.

## **8. BIODEGRADABLE PACKAGING**

Delaware Farm Bureau supports efforts for the use of cornstarch based biodegradable packaging for all packaging in the country.

## **9. BIODIESEL**

Delaware Farm Bureau supports the creation of a definition of Biodiesel within Delaware Code that meets the criteria of ASTM D 6751.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports a change in the Delaware Motor Fuel Tax rate that would provide an incentive to use Biodiesel.

## **10. CHECK-OFFS**

Delaware Farm Bureau, being fully aware that soybean producers throughout the State, having voted in a soybean check-off, feeling that market development of soybeans is of the utmost importance, recommends that a minimum of 50% of the available check-off funds be directed to market development.

Delaware Farm Bureau will pursue the enactment of legislation to charge the beef check-off only at the point of slaughter and only if the gross sale of each animal is over \$25. We encourage the Beef

Council to provide public disclosure of the disposition of funds annually and publish said disclosure in a form readily available to all dairymen.

#### **11. CORN/SORGHUM YIELDS**

Delaware Farm Bureau believes that yields for sorghum in crop insurance and FSA should be established on the same bushels per acre basis as corn.

#### **12. CROP INSURANCE**

Delaware Farm Bureau supports the development of a cost share program for farmers who participate in crop insurance.

*(2013)* Delaware Farm Bureau recommends that limitations be removed from the Federal Crop Insurance Act and that the Basic Provisions when double cropping is recognized by an agricultural expert for the county.

#### **13. DEER**

Delaware Farm Bureau supports greater flexibility by the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control in enforcing the present rules and regulations on the hunting or taking of deer.

We support issuing additional antlerless deer permits to control the damage of crops on owned or leased farmland at no expense to the landowner or leasee. This requirement is not limited to current established seasons.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports the State of Delaware establishing a fund to reimburse crop losses due to damage by deer. Further, we recommend that a committee consisting of farmer representation, Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, and the University of Delaware Cooperative Extension Service be appointed to monitor this effort.

We support deer hunting being permitted in all state parks during the hunting season.

We support deer hunting license fees being waived for farmers who hunt on land they lease, provided they have the owner's consent.

Delaware Farm Bureau would like to have a cost analysis done to assess the amount of damage deer have caused to vehicles and farm crops.

Delaware Farm Bureau encourages the State of Delaware to adopt a twelve-month hunting season when there is verification of crop damage by the Department of Natural Resources; ~~with the exception of hunting on Sundays.~~ *(2018)*

*(2019)* Delaware Farm Bureau recommends the Delaware Legislature form a Delaware Deer Damage Task Force to study and make recommendations of ways to decrease the white-tailed deer damage in Delaware.

*(2019)* It is recommended the task force consist of members from the Delaware Senate and House of Representatives, the farming community, agricultural commodity groups, the insurance

industry, Delaware's Land Grant colleges, the state agencies of DNREC, DDA, DOT, DHSS and environmental groups.

(2019) Delaware Farm Bureau urges the State of Delaware to allow the use of the semi-automatic platform of modern sporting rifles as permitted weapons for the harvest of deer on private land permitted under Deer Damage Assistance Programs.

(2019) Delaware Farm Bureau strongly urges the State of Delaware to undertake a thorough measurement of the population and distribution of property destroying wildlife within the State.

#### **14. DELAWARE COSTAL ZONE ACT**

The Delaware Farm Bureau opposes any legislative effort, be it State or local, which denies or limits residential development in the coastal areas subject to the Delaware Costal Zone Act.

#### **15. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

The Delaware Farm Bureau, in an effort to support the many dedicated and valued employees of the Department of Agriculture, encourages the appropriate state agencies to review, compare, and determine if the Department of Agriculture is equal in their current classifications and pay scales for similar jobs at various state agencies.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports seeking funding for the Department of Agriculture in order to provide administrative assistance and office space for all the commodity groups.

#### **16. DIESEL FUEL**

Delaware Farm Bureau is in favor of and will lobby for legislation to guarantee not less than a 42 cetane rating on diesel fuel being delivered to the farm.

Delaware Farm Bureau will work towards repealing the State Fuel Tax on bio-diesel.

Delaware Farm Bureau will encourage fuel distributors to carry bio-diesel and publicize the availability and benefits of using bio-diesel.

#### **17. DISPARAGEMENT OF AGRICULTURE PRODUCTS**

Farm Bureau supports enactment of a law that provides producers for the recovery of damages for disparagement of any perishable agriculture or aquaculture food products.

#### **18. DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE**

We strongly support legislation that would provide for heavier sentences for those convicted of driving under the influence of either alcohol or drugs and that would also prevent drivers so charged from being able to circumvent the law by technicalities. We also support continued efforts to educate the public in the dangers of these products, especially in our schools.

#### **19. DUES**

(2018) The Delaware Farm Bureau annual dues membership will be increased to \$65.00.

## **20. EDUCATION**

Delaware Farm Bureau will develop an educational program for landowners and the general public to help them become more knowledgeable about Transfer of Development Rights (TDR's) and Purchase of Development Rights (PDR's) and how it will affect the value of their property.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports that there should be additional vocational technical facilities made available to accommodate the percent of growth in the population.

## **21. ELECTRICAL SERVICE**

Delaware Farm Bureau policy approves of the Rural Electric System and further approves of the Rural Electric Bank, now established by the Federal Government.

We oppose the interruption of any electric service if it is possible to repair or make alterations without neutralization of the lines.

We support the maintenance and continuation of a strong rural electrification program, feeling it is the responsibility of the Delaware Electric Cooperative directors to provide top management and a planned debt retirement.

Farm Bureau policy approves of co-generation or similar programs offered by public utility companies that create a cost or benefit to the customer directly or indirectly and assist in reducing electric consumption during peak demand periods and further suggests that these programs be offered equally by all public utility companies. Farm Bureau encourages and supports the Public Utility Service Commission in assuring the benefit to all Delawareans of these programs.

## **22. EMINENT DOMAIN**

Delaware Farm Bureau opposes the use of the right of Eminent Domain by any agency or department of the State of Delaware.

When the state exercises the right of Eminent Domain, we favor the acquisitions be kept to an absolute minimum.

Delaware Farm Bureau opposes any legislation which would give the Delaware Open Space Council or any private group the authority to condemn private lands on any real property, which they deem necessary for the purpose of preserving open space.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports legislation to prevent the use of eminent domain to acquire land for commercial purposes.

## **23. ENDANGERED SPECIES**

Since endangered species laws affect landowners and farmer's property rights and right to farm, Delaware Farm Bureau supports keeping "common sense" in the formation of these laws.

## **24. ENERGY**

Delaware Farm Bureau supports exploration of alternative energy sources such as geothermal, hydro, biomass, wind and solar.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports unrestricted net metering of customer-cited renewable electric resources will all public utility companies and distributed generation of renewable electric systems and access be to everyone.

#### **25. FARM TAGS**

Delaware Farm Bureau supports a discounted farm tag be allowed for trailers being used for farm use.

*(2014)* Delaware Farm Bureau will work with the Delaware Division of Motor Vehicle along with similar branches of government in the adjacent states to allow for the legal crossing of state lines with the FV tag while still remaining within the 20-mile radius of the farm border according to Delaware law; and

*(2014)* Delaware Farm Bureau make it a priority to engage in discussions with the states of Maryland and Pennsylvania.

*(2017)* Delaware Farm Bureau supports the use of the “Farmland Preservation” registration plate category to include trailers in support of the Delaware Agricultural Lands Preservation program and industry.

#### **26. FARM TRUCKS**

Delaware Farm Bureau policy states that laws concerning farm truck licenses should be strictly enforced.

Our policy is, pickup trucks towing cattle and other trailers should be licensed under the same provision as normal truck trailers, thus allowing for licensing based on the total weight of trucks and trailers, with a minimum registration fee to apply to the trailer.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports legislation to have untagged farm vehicles recognized as farm equipment.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports legislation that will allow a three-year inspection of FT tagged vehicles traveling no more than 5,000 miles per year.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports truck owners who no longer have a MGVWR sticker and cannot provide evidence of what the MGVWR is for their vehicles that are registered and licensed be extended beyond the current law of July 1, 2011 or for the active life of the vehicles.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports legislation to ensure that no operator or owner of a vehicle be fined that does not exceed their total gross weight as registered and licensed with the DMV unless said vehicle exceeds the registered limit.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports legislation exempting trucks carrying agricultural products from being rerouted to either portable or stationery scale locations without just and probable cause.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports that farm trailer registration be on the same rate as “FT” tags.

### **27. FARMLAND ASSESSMENT**

Delaware Farm Bureau supports legislation that would include farm structures in the Farmland Assessment Act.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports the exemption of property taxes on farm use structures.

Delaware Farm Bureau is to be proactive and engaged in any process of real-estate assessment taking place in Delaware with the goal of reducing or eliminating the tax burden on farm use structures.

### **28. FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE**

Delaware Farm Bureau supports Federal Disaster Assistance for farmers for crops on which Federal Crop Insurance is not available.

### **29. FIREARMS**

Delaware Farm Bureau opposes the compulsory registration of firearms, wholly feeling that a citizen has a right to bear arms.

### **30. FOREIGN LAND OWNERSHIP**

Foreign investment in United States farmland is a growing concern. Delaware Farm Bureau opposes a differential tax treatment for foreign investments in agricultural land under the foreign tax law or treated provisions.

### **31. FORESTRY**

Delaware Farm Bureau policy states that forestry activities of the State of Delaware should be under the management and control of the Department of Agriculture.

### **32. FRESHWATER WETLANDS**

Delaware Farm Bureau strongly opposes any regulation of wetlands activities exempted under the Clean Water Act.

Delaware Farm Bureau also supports Federal legislation: (1) establishing a clear and reliable definition of a wetland; (2) classifying wetlands according to their values and functions; and (3) providing compensation when the value of private property is diminished.

Delaware Farm Bureau further encourages any economic incentive and/or technical assistance the Federal and State agencies can provide in preserving or restoring freshwater wetlands.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports legislative initiatives to protect wetlands, wildlife habitat and other environmental issues that impact private property only if they provide financial incentives commensurate to the property owner loss of use and value provided to the health and welfare of the citizens of the State of Delaware.

### **33. GENETICALLY ENHANCED ORGANISMS**

(2015) Delaware Farm Bureau will work towards developing an aggressive program to inform the public of the benefits and good science of GEO's.

Delaware State Farm Bureau opposes any state legislation mandating state Genetically Modified Organism Labeling.

#### **34. GOVERNMENT CONTROL**

Delaware Farm Bureau policy is that the government should remove itself from agriculture insofar as it affects subsidies and controls.

We favor a market oriented by supply and demand.

We resolve that in peacetime the Federal Government should not be permitted to spend more than its income and should maintain a balanced budget.

#### **35. GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON AGRICULTURE**

Farm Bureau favors that policies originating from the Department of Agriculture be first reviewed by the Governor's Council on Agriculture before they are presented as legislation.

#### **36. GRAIN DISCOUNTING**

We support grain buyers including the discount schedule in their purchase contract at the time of signing.

#### **37. GRAIN SHIPPING-INSPECTION-STORAGE**

Delaware Farm Bureau urges the shipment of American grain and other commodities be done by the cheapest shipping available.

We oppose cargo preference legislation.

Our policy advocates the Delaware Department of Agriculture review present dockage procedures for grain and recommend to Delmarva Grain Dealers that they be changed to reflect actual moisture content.

We feel farmers should be paid a premium on dry grains (US #2 grading) above the standard level and support the elimination of double dockage on grains.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports the Department of Agriculture in securing the necessary funding for the grain inspector positions. Delaware Farm Bureau encourages the Economic Development Office to work with any interested entity to develop additional grain storage in Delaware.

#### **38. GROUNDWATER**

Delaware Farm Bureau is opposed to any mandatory requirement for groundwater monitoring on privately owned agricultural land.

#### **39. HEALTH CARE AND COST**

Delaware Farm Bureau strongly supports legislation calling for the review and approval of all health care insurance offered in the State of Delaware.

We believe that all companies and health insurance associations selling health care insurance in this state should be subject to cost review and rates by the Insurance Commissioner.

(2012) Delaware Farm Bureau formally opposes any kind of government run or required healthcare system.

#### **40. HEMP**

(2018) Delaware Farm Bureau adopts the American Farm Bureau Federation's policy "supporting the production, processing, commercialization and utilization of industrial hemp and that it be regulated by USDA rather than the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)."

We support federal legislation to amend the Controlled Substance Act to exclude industrial hemp.

#### **41. HIGHWAYS**

We oppose the building of new highways on productive farmland when traffic needs may be met by improving and enlarging already existing roads where feasible, with minimal impact on agricultural practices.

Delaware Farm Bureau opposes expressways such as the East/West Corridor across Sussex and all counties in Delaware.

#### **42. IMPACT FEES**

The Delaware Farm Bureau is opposed to legislation enacting impact fees.

#### **43. IMPORT LIMITS**

We strongly feel that the importing of fruits and vegetables that have residues of chemicals that are not labeled by the EPA for use in Delaware and U.S.A. should be restricted. We also feel that the export of chemicals, when those chemicals are banned in the U.S.A. should cease.

#### **44. AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION AGENT**

Delaware Farm Bureau requests that the University of Delaware submit in their budget request funding for a full-time agricultural extension agent in each county.

#### **45. LAND COMPENSATION**

Should it become necessary for any state or local government to buy preserved land, the landowner should be compensated at the prevailing fair market value, at the highest and best use, as though a conservation easement had not been sold on the land.

#### **46. LAND GRANT COLLEGES**

Farm Bureau supports that all students attending Land Grant Colleges be required to take an agriculture course regardless of their major

#### **47. LAND USE**

We oppose the purchase of any land in the State of Delaware by the Federal and State Department of Wildlife.

We oppose any efforts by government agencies that would reduce the fair market value of private property or limit a landowner's ability to sell to the highest bidder.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports home rule and is opposed to any law or regulation that takes away the decision-making ability from the governing bodies of any county.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports and requests that all land use regulations be reviewed and rewritten with the intent that each parcel to be developed shall yield the maximum densities feasible to minimize use of land for development.

(2019) Delaware Farm Bureau amends its Land Use Policy to state that the Delaware Farm Bureau opposes the “fee simple” purchase of lands by any state agency for the purpose of preserving open space. The Delaware Farm Bureau supports the purchase of conservation easements to preserve open space.

#### **48. LANDFILL AREAS**

We urge that a Farm Bureau member or members be appointed to any agency, committee, commission, or other organization involved in the location, acquisition, and/or operation of landfill areas in any county in Delaware.

#### **49. LAW ENFORCEMENT**

Delaware Farm Bureau supports a timely response on calls to protect property and persons in rural areas. We support more severe sentencing and enforcement for violators of trespassing and littering laws. Increased funding for additional prison facilities and staffing in rural areas is also needed.

#### **50. LEGAL FEES**

Delaware Farm Bureau urges the State to assume financial responsibility for surveys and lawyers' fees when it disputes boundaries with a private landowner.

#### **51. LOW INTEREST LOANS**

Delaware Farm Bureau supports the State making industrial bond money available for low interest loans to the farming community as it does to other businesses.

#### **52. MANURE STORAGE STRUCTURES**

The Delaware Farm Bureau supports implementation of a tax exemption for farmers that have been required by law through the Nutrient Management Plan to erect manure storage structures on their farms.

#### **53. MARKETING AND GOVERNMENT**

Realizing that most of the items and commodities that the State of Delaware purchases can be purchased through Delaware distributors and can be Delaware products and commodities, Delaware Farm Bureau policy urges the purchasing of farm products grown and produced in Delaware when available at competitive prices and quality.

Our policy opposes any export embargoes since we believe that the free marketplace calls for agricultural exports, as well as, sales in the United States.

We also feel that embargoes have proven to be totally ineffective in national security matters and detrimental to the farm, as well as, the U.S. economy.

We favor the continuance and expansion of farm exports.

We support a foreign policy that promotes free and open trade.

We support efforts to change the International Monetary Fund (IMF) system to the point that it will not permit moneys loaned to third world and other struggling nations by the United States to be used to settle debts with any other country or corporation and will not permit such funds to be used to purchase commodities from any other nation when the United States has such a commodity for sale.

Since we feel that we can compete with farmers of the world, but not with their national treasuries, Delaware Farm Bureau encourages the United States Department of Agriculture to support the Export Enhancement Program.

Delaware Farm Bureau recommends that USDA require retailers of fresh fruits and vegetables to accurately display country of origin.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports the creating of a full-time position for an agricultural marketing specialist to coordinate, research, and develop the establishment of new value-added markets.

#### **54. MEDICARE ASSIGNMENT**

Delaware Farm Bureau calls upon all Delaware physicians to accept Medicare assignment for all of their older patients.

#### **55. NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL**

Delaware Farm Bureau urges the Department of Agriculture, Department of Transportation, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, any other State organization, to set up and coordinate a program to control weeds identified as Noxious Weeds and Multiflora Rose. We urge that it be illegal to reseed any of the aforementioned plants, carrying a penalty for noncompliance.

We support enforcement of noxious weed laws by the Secretary of Agriculture.

We support the addition of Multiflora Rose and Spurred Anoda, to the State's Noxious Weed List.

Our policy urges the State Department of Agriculture to establish a program of education for State departments and agencies so that they can identify, and control Johnson Grass so that it can be checked on rights-of-way and other State properties and thereby eliminated and prevented from spreading from State properties to farmer's fields.

#### **56. NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT**

The consent decree requiring the State of Delaware to comply with EPA's Clean Water Act, and more specifically in their TMDL program does not require non-point pollution to come into compliance. The Delaware Farm Bureau is demanding that non-point pollution is not addressed in the consent decree and ask the Governor to insist that DNREC only address point source pollution in the TMDL program and allow farmers to continue implementing voluntary measures when addressing nutrient management issues. Whereas agriculture provides substantial income to the State of Delaware and a living in this profession is becoming increasingly more difficult. Not allowing voluntary measures to continue will result in a hardship to all the farmers in the state.

Delaware Farm Bureau opposes any changes in the regulations to the state or federal nutrient management program.

#### **57. ORGANIZED LABOR**

Farm Bureau policy is that the right of an individual to belong to a union should be his choice and NOT a requirement for holding or obtaining a job. Therefore, Delaware Farm Bureau supports any current or future legislation granting the right-to-work in the State of Delaware.

Our policy opposes the unionization of employees of the State or any of its political subdivisions.

We recognize that secondary boycotts are illegal and strongly feel that they should not be permitted.

We oppose passage of any legislation granting the right to strike to any person or organization whose members' salaries or wages are paid for with tax dollars.

#### **58. PARKS AND RECREATION**

Delaware Farm Bureau policy states that a fee should be assessed for the use of public parks and recreation areas for the purpose of maintaining them.

#### **59. PESTICIDES**

Delaware Farm Bureau resolves that a concentrated effort should be applied to ensure that the State Highway Department use trained personnel in applying sprays and that they be properly supervised.

Realizing the condition and effectiveness of agricultural chemicals can be influenced by their age, Delaware Farm Bureau recommends that the manufacturing date and expiration date be applied to the label of agricultural chemicals in such a manner as to be easily understandable.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports legislation that removes the farmer from liability from cases of so-called damages by the farming community, be it plant foods or other chemicals unless they can prove negligence on the part of the farmer. Chemicals applied according to the manufacturer's label will not be considered as negligence.

#### **60. POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS**

Delaware Farm Bureau favors legislation limiting active, organized campaigning for national offices to the nine months preceding the general election in November and limiting the campaign for state and local offices to four months prior to the November elections.

To better inform Farm Bureau members a candidate questionnaire will be developed on each candidate seeking an elected office to determine their views on agricultural issues. This information will be published and distributed for the general knowledge of the agricultural community.

#### **61. POTASH TARIFF**

Tariffs levied on imported potash from Canada will escalate the price of fertilizer since the United States potash industry cannot supply the demand. We strongly object to the importation tariffs and request these tariffs be lifted immediately.

## **62. POULTRY**

The Delaware Farm Bureau poultry growers oppose controls, quotas, and national marketing orders on poultry and eggs.

Our policy is that foreign trade on poultry products should be promoted.

Our policy states that poultry growers should not be made to stand the loss caused by rough and careless catching crews and other employees of the companies.

Our policy is that poultry inspection is primary to the maintenance of a poultry production program. We recommend that all poultry industry organizations utilize the USDA inspectors and do their best to avoid duplication or ineffective monitoring.

Our policy states that neither the Federal Government, nor anyone else, should determine under what line speeds poultry processing plants should operate while processing poultry.

We oppose any legislation or regulation which would eliminate mandatory federal inspection of poultry, because of the deterioration of the federal inspection system or loss of consumer confidence which could result because of the product quality, labeling, and other factors of state-inspected poultry products versus federal inspections.

Delaware Farm Bureau requests that Delaware farmers be given first priority to utilize the Nutrient Relocation Program's transportation funds to receive poultry manure from our state.

## **63. PRECISION AG EQUIPMENT PURCHASING PROGRAM**

Delaware Farm Bureau supports the State of Delaware developing a cost share program for the purchasing of precision ag equipment.

## **64. PRESERVING AGRICULTURAL BUSINESSES**

Delaware Farm Bureau encourages the State of Delaware to develop programs to help existing farm related and new ag businesses to stay and locate in Delaware.

## **65. PROPERTY ASSESSMENT**

Delaware Farm Bureau supports the County government's rights to make decisions on assessment and re-assessment.

## **66. PUBLIC RELATIONS**

Since many citizens do not understand that the farmers and watermen's future depends on their ability to protect the environment, Delaware Farm Bureau will develop materials to show a more positive environmental image of farmers and watermen through press releases and videos to be used by speakers representing the organization.

## **67. RECYCLING**

Delaware Farm Bureau fully recognizes that our landfills are being filled at an alarming rate. New technology demonstrates that newspaper and other products can be reused as a cost-effective bedding material for livestock and glass recycling igloos are being located for easy public access and new sewage treatment processes are being implemented locally which makes stabilized sludge a cost-effective fertilizer and liming material. With these thoughts in mind, Delaware Farm Bureau supports

statewide recycling as an effort to control landfill sizes and allowing for a more cost-effective agriculture.

#### **68. REGULATION OF NITRATES**

Delaware Farm Bureau policy opposes mandatory regulation of nitrates for farmers alone; but favors regulation, if applicable to all, including sewer treatment plants and private individual septic systems.

#### **69. RIGHT TO FARM**

Delaware Farm Bureau policy states that the farmer's right to farm is his/ her greatest privilege.

We also oppose any group or individual restricting the use of any business or railroad that may be marshaling or assembling trains or conducting any other business that is long established within a given area.

We support and reaffirm the American Farm Bureau's position which states "We support responsible actions designed to permit and protect the privilege and the rights of farmers and commercial fishermen to farm and fish without undue or unreasonable restrictions, regulations, or harassment from the public or private sectors."

Delaware Farm Bureau supports any proposed county ordinance to establish agricultural use protections including noise, dust, odors, spraying and nighttime or early hour farming and all other normal farming activities.

We support legislation to preclude anyone participating in a pick-and-cut-your-own activity from suing the operator for injuries or other damages incurred.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports amending the Right to Farm law to allow farmers to display signs on agricultural property identifying their farm and advertising their products and the advertising of these products and farm lane signs be exempt from state and county regulations.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports extending the Right to Farm law to provide relief from nuisance lawsuits for those companies that agriculture is dependent upon and protect all agriculture related infrastructure regardless of local zoning laws and ordinances.

It is the belief of Delaware Farm Bureau that the right of farmers and ranchers to engage in modern farming and ranching practices should be forever guaranteed in this state. No law shall be enacted which abridges the right of farmers and ranchers to employ agricultural technology, modern livestock production and ranching practices.

(2016) Delaware State Farm Bureau encourages the General Assembly to pass legislation protecting the farmer's right to use any biotechnology product available on the market.

#### **70. RIGHT-OF-WAY**

Delaware Farm Bureau states that mowing along secondary roads should be put up for an annual bid, thus allowing proper maintenance of the highways, as Delaware Farm Bureau feels that the Highway Departments are not doing a proper job to insure safe driving conditions.

We feel effort should be made to bring the ditches and culverts to a more workable condition and maintain them in a like manner.

We support efforts to make secondary roads and bridges accessible to farm trucks and equipment.

We support authorization of funds for repair or replacement of bridges on secondary roads to provide for orderly transportation of farm products to market.

We deplore the practice of encroachment on highway rights-of-way with plows, discs, and other agricultural implements which are doing damage to the rights-of-way.

We advocate the discontinuation by the State Highway Department of the use of signs labeling certain roadsides as "wildflowers," "crown vetch," etc., since they allow the propagation of noxious weeds. We further advocate the Highway Department regaining control of maintenance of such areas.

Farm Bureau advocates the exemption of farmers from State regulation of temporary signs advertising their farm products.

We urge the Delaware Department of Transportation to notify new home builders and all landowners of their responsibilities for mailbox locations as any mailboxes are too close to traffic lanes.

Delaware Farm Bureau believes that legislation should be passed calling for truck pull-off areas on Delaware's major highways. These truck pull-off areas, allowing truckers to rest, should be located, one in each county and signs specifying the areas as truck pull-offs should be properly identified.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports the modification of Delaware law that the right-of-way be yielded to all farm equipment encountered on Delaware roads and accident cases involving farm machinery require the officer to use discretion as to the right-of-way yielded by farm equipment given the road situations of each case.

#### **71. RISK-BENEFIT ANALYSIS ON LAWS & REGULATIONS**

Delaware Farm Bureau is in favor of developing a program for assessing the costs of implementation and compliance of new laws and regulations relating to public health, safety and environmental issues. This program will:

- 1) Estimate the risks to the health and safety of individuals addressed by the regulation.
- 2) Estimate the costs associated with the implementation of and compliance with the regulation.
- 3) Certify that the regulation would substantially advance the purpose of protecting the public health and safety or the environment.
- 4) Certify that the regulation would produce benefits to public health and safety or the environment that would justify the cost of implementation and compliance

## **72. SAFETY**

The Delaware Farm Bureau urges the State Police and Delaware Safety Council to teach bicycle safety in all public schools and to youth organizations such as 4-H, Boy Scouts of America, church groups, etc.

Our policy urges our county Farm Bureaus to offer first-responder training (i.e., CPR-Cardio-pulmonary resuscitation) and other emergency first-aid techniques to their members.

## **73. SCHOOL TAXES**

Delaware Farm Bureau policy favors that a law be passed allowing only persons owning real estate to vote in a referendum where taxes are to be applied to the property owner (s).

Delaware Farm Bureau believes that real estate tax for local school expenses is not a fair and equitable form of tax.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports legislation to put into effect a state-wide flat tax on taxable income which would abolish and replace all revenue collected from local school district real estate and capitation taxes. This tax would be collected by the State Department of Finance and distributed to the school districts on a pupil unit basis, with no strings attached. This would give real equalization and eliminate the need for district referendums.

## **74. SEED**

Delaware Farm Bureau policy is that we are in favor of a more rigid seed and plant law to prevent the importation of poor-quality seeds and plants.

Delaware Farm Bureau opposes weed seed contaminated feed and urges labeling to specific percentages of foreign material.

## **75. SLOW MOVING VEHICLES**

Delaware Farm Bureau policy states that it should urge its members to use the slow-moving vehicle emblem whenever possible, that the State of Delaware should be encouraged to familiarize drivers with the emblem, and that laws should be passed allowing the slow moving vehicle emblems to be displayed only on slow moving vehicles and NOT for lane markers, etc.

## **76. SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY**

Delaware Farm Bureau favors restricting Delaware Solid Waste Authority's right of eminent domain, its right to arbitrarily raise fees, and its right to set regulations without public hearings and/or public review.

Since roads leading to landfills and other roads in reasonable vicinity of landfills become filled with waste as a result of being blown off a truck and flow or falls into farmers' fields, we feel that the Solid Waste Authority should cooperate with the Highway Department in seeing that these particular roads are cleaned often and regularly, especially Saturdays.

## **77. STATE AND FEDERAL REGULATORY AGENCIES**

Delaware Farm Bureau policy states that a closer cooperation should exist between the State Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control and the Natural Resource Conservation Service in reference to standards for lagoons and other types of manure storage facilities.

#### **78. STATE RESOURCE AREA MAPS**

Delaware Farm Bureau supports an effort to require landowner notification by the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control to include the right of landowners the option to remove the “state resource area” designation from their property or properties and remove said designation from any and all maps.

#### **79. TAKING OF PRIVATE PROPERTY**

Delaware Farm Bureau is against the "taking of property rights." These rights include the right-to-farm and the rights that are traditionally perceived as property rights.

Farm Bureau encourages all government agencies, including local, state and federal to follow procedures insuring against taking of private property rights for public purposes without just compensation.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports that, when the Department of Transportation condemns farmland which affects the tenant's income, they reimburse the farmer/businessman for loss of income because of the loss of owned/rented land eliminated by the State with replacement of equal land or compensation.

Farm Bureau supports legislation that would require compensation to the property owner when a partial taking occurs by any government agency. In addition, Delaware Farm Bureau encourages that if at least 15% of the property is taken it would be required that the landowner be compensated by the government for this action. Further, should the reduction be greater than 50%, the government agency involved should be required to purchase property or affected portion thereof as designated by the owner at its current fair market value.

Delaware Farm Bureau opposes any policy to limit entrances (access) along preservation corridors and other roadways because this would be a “taking of property rights” by limiting the usage and access of our land.

Delaware Farm Bureau opposes legislation which would limit the authority of cities to annex open space and other lands into their boundaries.

Delaware Farm Bureau opposes any State or local legislative effort which denies or limits residential development in the coastal areas subject to the Delaware Coastal Zone Act.

#### **80. TAXES**

Delaware Farm Bureau policy states that action should be taken to collect all taxes now levied by the Legislature, and no enactment for any additional taxes should be completed until a complete collection program is carried out.

Delaware Farm Bureau policy also states that homes and properties should be properly assessed and taxed accordingly.

We feel real estate producing income should be taxed, regardless of its ownership.

Our policy favors legislation making the current filing fee for motor vehicle registration a tax so that it can be deducted from State and Federal income taxes.

Our policy favors legislation making medical insurance payments deductible from State and Federal taxes.

Farm Bureau opposes the development of this State by industry and tourism with the use of tax dollars and the development of this state by offering tax concessions, or other gifts of this type using public money, to industry for coming into the State when it can pay its own way.

To reduce financial risk Farm Bureau proposes an allowance in the Federal Income Tax Code allowing farmers to use income averaging when reporting their taxes.

Delaware Farm Bureau calls for support of legislation to cut the top rate for long-term capital gain taxes.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports legislation that would eliminate state and federal capital gains tax for farmers and landowners resulting from the sale of the said lands from those who participate in any program that preserve lands for future generations by way of the sale of lands, the sale of development rights, the sale of transfer of development rights, the sale of conservation or preservation easement, and/or any sale of combination of the aforementioned.

(2015) The Delaware Farm Bureau supports legislation that would create an annual state and federal Investment Tax Credit for the American farmer for principal payments for the purchase and ownership of farms and farm lands.

Delaware State Farm Bureau opposes the following:

- implementing a water tax/fee on farm property, buildings, and irrigation systems
- the proposed creation of the “Clean Water for Delaware Act”
- establishing the “Clean Water for Delaware Trust Fund”

#### **81. TECHNOLOGY FEES**

Delaware Farm Bureau believes that technology fees, and/or royalty fees, or any other similar fees should not be imposed only on the American farmer as it puts us at an unfair disadvantage with the rest of the global market.

#### **82. TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS**

County Comprehensive Plans offer Transfer of Development Rights (TDR’s) programs which would concentrate development into planning districts and propose transfer of development rights only within the same planning districts. Delaware Farm Bureau supports a voluntary program which will allow the transfer of development rights across all planning districts.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports that any legislative advisory committee for PDR’s and TDR’s should be comprised of only farmers.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports incorporating a special development zone into any Transfer of Development Rights legislation.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports the leasing of development rights by the State of Delaware.

Delaware Farm Bureau requests state law to allow Transfer of Development Rights from one planning district to any other planning district within the same county.

Delaware Farm Bureau requests that each County government include a provision requiring municipalities to participate in the adopted TDR program in order to annex parcels of land.

#### **83. TRANSFER TAX**

Delaware Farm Bureau urges the state and county to exempt farm property from the transfer tax when the transfer of such land remains in agriculture.

#### **84. TRESPASSING**

Our position is that the right of the property owner includes protecting the property owner from liability as a result of trespassing.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports legislation that would amend Delaware's trespassing law to include losses of agricultural commodities resulting from damage from all motor vehicles, or by any person who, without permission goes onto farmland.

Delaware Farm Bureau urges the State authorities to limit their posting of "No Hunting" signs to state properties only.

We support that the right of entry to private property needs to be established and requiring that a surveying company should first receive prior approval from both landlord/tenant before such entry and shall be held liable for damages incurred while doing such survey.

#### **85. VANDALISM AND THEFT**

We support the courts enforcing a penalty on any individual(s) in the amount of three times the damages caused from vandalism and theft. These areas include agricultural and horticultural and/or commodities rented or owned.

#### **86. WASTEWATER SPRAY IRRIGATION**

The Delaware Farm Bureau has endorsed the utilization of monitored spray irrigation for the purpose of natural wastewater treatment.

#### **87. WATER**

Delaware Farm Bureau favors the control of inland waters being kept in the hands of the property owner and not any government organization.

We support the landowners' rights to water resources and the protection of these rights through favorable county and state legislation.

We oppose the Delaware River Basin Commission, Delaware Department of Natural Resources or any other government agency taking our water rights, charging us for our water, or limiting what we can do with our land without fair compensation.

#### **88. WELFARE**

Delaware Farm Bureau is in favor of a medical doctor's certificate being required prior to receiving welfare when jobs are available.

We also favor that State legislation be developed requiring all able-bodied welfare recipients to do a reasonable amount of work in order to qualify for welfare.

We favor State legislation requiring stricter screening of applicants and a closer check be kept on the recipients in an effort to eliminate those who should not receive welfare.

We further state that no welfare or food stamps are paid to anyone who is out of work as a result of the individuals themselves being on strike.

#### **89. WILDLIFE**

Because blackbirds and starlings do excessive damage to agriculture, Delaware Farm Bureau favors control of the blackbirds and starlings by the Federal government and the continued legality of noisemakers, gun-type exploders, etc., for keeping birds away from crops.

Delaware Farm Bureau favors the taking of foxes, by either trap or gun.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports that the State of Delaware adequately fund the removal of beavers that are causing flooding of farmland, roadways and residential property.

#### **90. YOUNG FARMERS & RANCHERS**

Delaware Farm Bureau recommends the adoption of the age of their committee members to be set at 18 to 40 years old, be reflected as such in all county farm bureaus in the state of Delaware and be formally considered by the American Farm Bureau Federation.

#### **91. ZONING**

We oppose land use and development restrictions, limiting building lot size and development for agricultural zoned property differing from land of other zoning classifications.

Delaware Farm Bureau believes that zoning and land development planning should be controlled by county government. We strongly urge that the responsibility for land use, planning and zoning be kept under the control of county government.

Delaware Farm Bureau supports that each county government be required to send written notification of any zoning changes directly to the landowner to allow the landowner to have time to appeal the zoning change.

We support that a requirement of notification of present and active agriculture in the area should be included on every deed of sale of land and/or home purchase as well as notification of tax ditch right-of-ways.

Delaware Farm Bureau desires that all residential density start with the same base density.