

## 2023 NHFB Policy Document

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### Table of Contents:

1. Agricultural Lending	2
2. Agricultural Representation	2
3. Agricultural Research	2
4. Biotechnology	3
5. (UNH) Cooperative Extension (UNHCE)	3
6. Crime and Law Enforcement	4
7. Crop Protection Materials	4
8. Dairy	5
9. Education	6
10. Energy	7
11. Equine	8
12. Family Life	8
13. Farming Opportunity	8
14. Federal Government	9
15. Firearms	9
16. Fish and Game	9
17. Food Safety, Health, and Public Safety	10
18. Forestry	11
19. Government Owned Property	11
20. Insurance	11
21. International Trade	12
22. Labor	12
23. Land Use	12
24. Livestock	13
25. Maple	15
26. Marketing	15
27. Media	15
28. Motor Vehicles Law and Transportation	15
29. New Hampshire (NH) Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food (DAMF)	16
30. Nutrition and Food Programs	17
31. Patriotism	17
32. Poultry	17
33. Product Labeling	17
34. Promotion	18
35. Property Rights	18
36. Solid Waste and Recycling	19
37. State and County Government	20
38. Taxation	21
39. United States Department of Agriculture (USDA): Farm Service Agency (FSA) and National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)	22
40. University System of New Hampshire (USNH) and the University of New Hampshire (UNH) College of Life Sciences and Agriculture (COLSA)	23
41. Water Resources and Environmental Regulation	24

*Italics print at the beginning of sections was voted by the delegates to be a statement of philosophy.*

## **AGRICULTURAL LENDING**

*Farm Credit is America's largest cooperative lender and is a vital source of credit for agriculture and rural America. (We believe) Farm Credit must maintain its cooperative structure and local participation. Farm Credit should be authorized to finance small rural businesses, which are important to the economic well-being of rural communities. USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) should not lend money in a direct loan or guarantee a loan unless it is based on sound credit practices.*

1. We oppose changes in the Farm Credit system that will limit its access to national money markets.
2. We support the availability of responsible adequate credit for all phases of agriculture, commercial fishing, and forest products industries, including the full credit needs of all farmers, all agricultural marketing and processing entities, as well as all other entities providing farm services and farm supplies. Such credit should be predicated on sound credit practices including purpose, repayment ability, equity, and management ability.
3. We support regulatory changes to allow farmers to do business with the Farm Credit institution that best fits their needs.

## **AGRICULTURAL REPRESENTATION**

*Production agriculture should be represented in the decision-making processes when public policies affecting land use, farm practices, livestock production, crop production, water regulation, and similar issues are considered to assure a balance of farm and non-farm goals. Input from production agriculture must guide University of New Hampshire (UNH) Cooperative Extension (UNHCE) when forming policy and procedures affecting farming.*

1. We support agricultural representation on county conservation district boards to assure a balance of agricultural and other environmental goals.
2. We support the establishment of municipal agricultural committees or commissions (RSA 674:44-e).
3. We support farmers serving on municipal conservation commissions, agricultural committees, and agricultural commissions.
4. We support statutory requirements for production agriculture representation on state boards and commissions, including to the University System of New Hampshire (USNH) Board of Trustees.
5. As long as the Governor's Commission on the Humane Treatment of Animals exists, we support additional farmer representation being added to it.
6. We support increased agricultural representation on UNHCE Advisory Councils that are reflective of county agricultural activity.

## **AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH**

*Research of agricultural practices such as biotechnology, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), reduced tillage, sustainable agriculture, and water quality management achieves positive impacts on the environment and quality of life. Agricultural research is often of a long-term nature requiring scientific and economic risk benefit analysis when assessing new technologies. Blanket prohibitions of advances in crop and animal production methods are irresponsible. Regulatory action must be predicated on peer-reviewed science.*

1. We support increased research and development of renewable energy sources.
2. We support increasing the amount allocated to the National Institute of Food and Agriculture by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) under the Hatch Act in order to bolster research opportunities at smaller institutions such as UNH, and resources for agricultural infrastructure.
3. We support research on control measures for aggressive invasive flora and fauna.
4. We support research efforts to reduce the odor of organic residuals.

5. We support research into productive ways for NH agriculture to adapt to the changing climate.
6. We support funding for research into carbon sequestration and cover crop systems.
7. We support funding for research into the health risks and strategies for mitigating risks associated with perchlorate and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in water and food and support using the best available science and appropriate risk assessment for the establishment of health goals or regulatory standards.

## **BIOTECHNOLOGY**

*State and national political leaders and industry partners should develop a positive national strategy for biotechnology research, development, and consumer education. Our competitive advantage in world markets will be maintained by the continued support and encouragement of technological advancements. In order to provide transparency, testing the safety and nutritional quality of genetically modified organisms should follow the scientific method and remain under the direction and control of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and USDA.*

1. We oppose state and local regulation of biotechnology.
2. We support regulations that allow the use of approved biotechnology products without the requirement for registration in a government program.
3. We support a farmer's right to adopt biotechnology and related farm practices.

## **(UNH) COOPERATIVE EXTENSION (UNHCE)**

*UNHCE is an essential conduit between academic research and practical application in the field. As the major outreach component of UNH, the state's Land, Sea, and Space Grant University, UNHCE programs have a positive impact on citizens and communities throughout the state. UNHCE should take a proactive approach through a variety of effective education methods and publications to disseminate information on research-based programs examining alternative farm practices that help producers to be profitable.*

1. We support a UNHCE system that prioritizes agricultural outreach education to NH's farmers and forest owners.
2. We support retaining field staff in agricultural and forestry disciplines in every county.
3. We support each NH county providing their share of funding a full-time UNHCE Food and Agriculture specialist and forester position in their county.
4. We support UNHCE emphasizing a reduction in administration in order to keep personnel on the ground in each county.
5. We urge USNH Trustees and the UNH President to support funding for UNHCE. Further, we urge the continuation of the three-way funding partnership of USDA, state, and county government appropriations.
6. We oppose across the board percentage budget cuts and hiring freezes in UNHCE.
7. We support UNHCE agricultural programs which emphasize safe and local food production by our state's diverse agricultural industries.
8. We support UNHCE's food safety training and its availability at a reasonable cost.
9. We support 4-H as a tool for developing future farmers and industry leaders with the major emphasis of 4-H programs placed on agricultural projects.
10. We support 4-H programs that emphasize positive youth development including life skills that will enhance readiness for college, entering the workforce, and professional careers in agriculture and natural resource sciences.
11. We support allowing UNHCE to promote the federal nutrition programs in all schools regardless of the number of free or reduced lunches taken in school.
12. We support the increased role of UNHCE Advisory Councils to partner with UNHCE to identify agricultural program needs and priorities, advocate for continued funding at the county level, and

provide input and participation in the hiring of county-based staff.

## **CRIME AND LAW ENFORCEMENT**

*Plaintiffs who initiate unsuccessful agricultural nuisance lawsuits should be liable for costs incurred by defendants.*

1. We support vigorous prosecution, timely trials, and increased enforcement of laws regarding criminal trespass, theft, vandalism, and destruction of farm equipment, products, and property under RSA 539:9 Agricultural Vandalism.
2. We support full prosecution of eco-terrorists and agro-terrorists.
3. We support penalties for malicious crop damage, which should include mandatory restitution, loss of vehicular licenses and release of the names of juveniles and their parents or guardians.
4. We support enhanced penalties for thieves caught stealing from a farm stand.
5. We support timely prosecution of animal cruelty cases.
6. We support laws that prohibit the withholding of evidence from law enforcement agencies in cases of animal abuse. In the event alleged animal cruelty is reported or documented, the original unedited version of any video evidence must be made available.
7. We oppose requiring veterinarians to report animal cruelty.
8. In any alleged animal cruelty situation where a judgement needs to be made, we support investigating officials utilizing a veterinarian who is proficient in the husbandry of the type of animal involved in the investigation, be it companion, exotic, or livestock.
9. In animal cruelty cases where the animal(s) are not in imminent danger, we support allowing them to remain on site provided they are cared for as ordered by the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food (DAMF).
10. We support stricter laws against littering with tougher penalties and more enforcement.

## **CROP PROTECTION MATERIALS**

*Public health and the environment are best served by having a wide variety of options available for agricultural crop protection. Appropriate pesticide use should consider all factors, including the benefits to the consumer of increased availability, wholesomeness, affordability, and safety of food. Research, education, technical assistance, and incentives can accomplish this rather than further regulations. Expanding IPM and biological pest control research provides practical substitutes or supplements to chemical controls.*

1. We support the judicious use of crop protection materials at the lowest effective application rates while maintaining sustainable productivity and profitability.
2. We support the Pesticide Control Board as the authority responsible for regulating pesticide use in New Hampshire.
3. We support administration and enforcement of pesticide regulations by the DAMF and oppose local regulation.
4. We support the use of IPM.
5. We support the continued availability of pesticides currently in use until viable replacements are introduced.
6. We support responsible use of agricultural chemicals and do not believe farmers should be held liable for unforeseen consequences when a valid license or permit is held and the chemicals are applied according to Environmental Protection Agency and NH pesticide laws and regulations.
7. We support uniform and reciprocal pesticide use requirements among states.
8. We support equal manufacturers' registration fees for all classes of pesticides.
9. We support an expedited labeling process for crop protectants in times of emergency.
10. We support allowing a designated farm representative being able to pick up restricted use pesticides for a licensed applicator.

11. We support enhanced bird control methods for bird suppression.
12. We support the unrestricted use of Avitrol to protect vegetable crops.

## **DAIRY**

*Federal government programs instituted to control milk prices should reflect the supply and demand of milk on a regional basis, rather than a national basis. Dairy promotion is vital to the industry. Promotion fees equal to those paid by domestic producers of milk should be paid on all dairy product imports. Anti-trust laws must consider the regional impacts of the consolidation of milk processors which could result in the loss of market options for dairy farmers.*

1. We support allowing the Dairy Margin Coverage program to set different margin targets based upon regional differences in costs.
2. We support an interim federal milk diversion program for short term relief of milk prices.
3. We support the Dairy Premium Plan (RSA 184:106-111).
4. We support policies by dairy cooperatives which create programs that allow startup dairies in NH to have access to milk markets.
5. We support dairy cooperatives using a supply management formula for quota or base programs that supports reasonable annual growth for all farms and encourages milk production to stay in New Hampshire.
6. We support the development of a flexible base in order to reduce the supply of milk when prices are low by reducing producers' base after a period of low prices.
7. We support efforts to expand cooperative participation in the Cooperatives Working Together program.
8. We support an analysis of the Class I price mover used to establish the price of fluid milk.
9. We support allowing milk producers to sell raw milk directly to consumers, provided it is labeled as such and purchaser name and contact information are collected for recall purposes. We encourage inspection and licensing.
10. We support requiring raw milk sellers to participate in the NH brucellosis and tuberculosis disease testing programs.
11. We support uniform standards for milk composition similar to the California standards.
12. We support the authority of the USDA Secretary of Agriculture to dispose of stocks of dairy products owned by the Commodity Credit Corporation.
13. We support government subsidized school milk.
14. We support food policies in schools that allow all flavors and fat levels of milk.
15. We support Granite State Dairy Promotion and the promotion of a positive image for agriculture by means such as hosting open barn events.
16. We support dairy farmers allocating ten cents of their milk promotion money to Granite State Dairy Promotion.
17. We support funding of National Dairy Promotion and Research Board activities, and its management by Dairy Management, Inc.
18. We support research and development to find innovative ways to market dairy products.
19. We support the use of the "Real Seal" logo to enable consumers to identify real dairy products.
20. We support the enforcement of laws prohibiting imitation dairy products from being sold as real dairy products.
21. We support the appropriate labeling of blends and low fat products.
22. We urge strict enforcement of the requirement that milk be stored at a temperature not to exceed 40 degrees Fahrenheit from the farm bulk tank to the consumer.
23. We support the re-classification of Polyether Ionophores by the FDA to reflect their true function as anticoccidials and to discontinue their classification as antibiotics.
24. We oppose hauling and stop charges to dairy farmers.

Federal Milk Marketing Orders (FMMOs)

### Cooperative Bloc Voting

25. We support dairy farmers being able to vote independently, and oppose allowing cooperatives casting ballots on behalf of their members during an FMMO approval or referendum process.

### Approval Process

26. We support modifying the referendum approval threshold to require a two-thirds majority of the voting producers and a two-thirds majority of the voting milk volume to amend or issue an FMMO.

27. We support changing the rules formulating the FMMOs to eliminate the danger of losing an order by voting down an amendment to the order.

### Pooling of Milk

28. We support a study on the economic impact of stricter qualification criteria on FMMO pools, including but not limited to the ability to establish competitive pay pricing in the U.S.

29. We support a comprehensive study of de-pooling rules in the FMMOs and the impact on farm gate milk prices of de-pooling practices used by processors. We support policies to ensure risk management tools used by farmers cover any adverse effects on farm gate milk prices from processing plants de-pooling.

### Milk Price Discovery

30. We support consideration of removing barrel cheddar cheese from the Chicago Mercantile Exchange spot markets.

31. We support improvements in milk pricing formulas to eliminate adverse impacts such as a wide block-barrel spread, whey price inversion or other price misalignments.

32. We support increasing the number of products included in mandatory price reporting.

33. We support revisions made by USDA to the National Dairy Product Sales Report being prominently featured in the price release, including an analysis of the farm-level price impact of the revision.

34. We support improving price discovery through mandatory daily electronic reporting of most dairy products including reporting and auditing of prices and inventories, including high-value dairy products as well as prices paid for milk and milk components. Consideration should be given to including different product specifications and products sold under terms of a forward contract.

### Milk Price Make Allowances

35. We support modifying make allowances to make them equal to a percentage of the commodity value.

36. We oppose milk price make allowances being indexed for factors such as inflation, labor or energy costs.

37. We support an economic examination of changes to milk price yield factors and the impact on farm-level milk prices.

### General Milk Pricing Provisions

38. We support regional FMMOs for adjusting the producer price of milk throughout the nation. We support maintaining component pricing.

39. We support Class I beverage milk pricing and pooling provisions, including all beverage-style products using milk or dairy products as an ingredient.

### Producers/Handlers

40. We support an economic analysis of the impact of non-volume regulations on the ability of producers/handlers to expand.

41. We support allowing producer processors the right to appeal adverse actions of the Milk Marketing Administrator through the USDA appeals hearing system.

42. We support a dairy producer's ability to sell less than the full amount of daily production into their milk marketing order at the blend price.

43. We support raising the exemption from the FMMO pool for producer-handlers and small Class I distribution plants.

## **EDUCATION**

*All children in NH should have an opportunity to study, observe and participate in agricultural operations. This traditional source of practical knowledge, ethics and understanding of life is essential to*

*the well-being of our society. The authority and responsibility for basic education belongs at the local level of government.*

1. We support the high school agriscience programs in the state.
2. We support providing agriscience and agribusiness education, including livestock husbandry, at all Career Technical Education (CTE) facilities.
3. We support state building aid for career technical education centers.
4. We support an educational curriculum consultant for agricultural education within the NH Department of Education (DOE).
5. We support agricultural leadership and civic skills building programs such as FFA (formerly known as Future Farmers of America).
6. We support Career Technical Student Organization FFA advisor funding as a separate line item within the budget of the DAMF.
7. We support career and technical agricultural education programs and urge the creation of programs in communities not yet served.
8. We support federal funding of the Perkins Act with full state matching funds for CTE programs.
9. We support the work of Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) and other agricultural education programs.
10. We support maintaining the independence of AITC program.
11. We support and encourage cooperation between NH farmers and schools to teach the importance of agriculture in NH.
12. We support out-of-school learning opportunities and encourage school administrators to release students for events such as exhibiting at fairs.
13. We support providing public school children curriculum time in the natural environment.
14. We support opening schools after Labor Day, taking into consideration local needs and local control, since seasonal oriented businesses, including agriculture and agri-tourism enterprises, depend on the NH student population to effectively run their operations.
15. We support the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs providing free lunch and breakfast programs for eligible students.

## **ENERGY**

*Research and development of renewable and sustainable energy sources that can become economically feasible and environmentally sound should be continued. The use of energy efficiency measures to reduce our dependency on and eliminate the waste of fossil fuel is essential. Farmers must have an adequate supply for agricultural production, in the event of energy rationing.*

1. We support development of a national energy policy that includes the continuation of low interest energy conservation loans for farmers and small businesses, the accumulation of a national oil reserve of six months, and the use of biofuels.
2. We support programs that improve the reliability and security of the electric grid.
3. We support continuing research and development of biofuel sources and products, and encourage their use.
4. We oppose federal subsidies for ethanol produced from feed grains.
5. We support research to use materials other than sawdust and wood shavings in the manufacturing of pellets and other fuel sources.
6. We support net metering of small dispersed electricity production from renewable sources at competitive rates.
7. We support increasing the state's renewable energy net metering limit for customer-generators to 3 megawatts.
8. We support the availability of net master metering for any entity producing electricity from non fossil fuel sources in excess of what they are consuming at any given time.

9. We support group net metering, such that a farm with multiple electric meters producing its own electricity from solar, hydro, wind, or other means, can have the dollar value of the excess power production applied to the charges incurred at its other meters.
10. We oppose an outright ban and unreasonable regulation of outdoor wood-fired boilers.
11. We support increasing the availability of three-phase power.
12. We support farm electric bills being protected from high peaks when on-demand meters spike because of power outages.

## **EQUINE**

*We recognize the importance of the equine agricultural industry in the state. Equine owners should establish a herd health management program with their veterinarian. Wearing a helmet while riding is a prudent safety measure and recommend that all riders wear one.*

1. We support the classification of all members of the equine species as livestock.
2. We oppose the classification of members of the equine species as companion animals.
3. We support equestrian use of NH Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) properties and other public lands as a listed use on designated trails and roadways.
4. We support requiring an Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) test whenever horse ownership changes.
5. We support organizers of equine events requiring a current EIA test.
6. We oppose the mandatory licensing of equine facilities.
7. We oppose a law requiring mandatory use of riding helmets.
8. We oppose amending the federal Horse Protection Act to prohibit the slaughtering of horses for human consumption.
9. We support funding for DAMF and USDA equine inspection, testing, laboratory, and quarantine services, and all equine disease control.

## **FAMILY LIFE**

*A morally strong, emotionally stable, and physically healthy family is basic to the quality of life in NH. Parents must take childrearing responsibilities seriously, emphasizing appropriate behavior, personal responsibility, and consideration for others.*

1. We support having educational resources available through voluntary programs to parents who seek to strengthen their families.
2. We support efforts to make broadband and cell phone coverage available to areas of the state where it is now limited.

## **FARMING OPPORTUNITY**

*Profitability in agriculture and economic returns in line with investment of capital, labor, and management is the best way to maintain NH's rural character. We recognize that both conventional and certified organic agricultural products are important components of the NH economy. The definition of sustainable agriculture includes environmental stewardship, long term profitability, and quality of life for farm owners, their workers, and the community. There is no one strategy or production method to accomplish this.*

1. We support federal and state legalization of the growing and sale of industrial hemp.
2. We support efforts to match beginning farmers with retiring farmers.
3. We support the full utilization of agricultural resources of the state and the maximum retention of good agricultural land.
4. We support the research, development, and marketing of non-traditional agricultural products and enterprises and new uses of existing products.
5. We support craft breweries, distilleries, and wineries using NH grown ingredients in their recipes.



6. We support programs that benefit long standing farms and farmers.

## **FEDERAL GOVERNMENT**

1. We support having federal regulatory agencies provide education and warnings prior to issuing fines and fees.
2. We support term limits for members of Congress.
3. We support an individual's right to choose for COVID-19 vaccination.

## **FIREARMS**

1. We support the sale of firearms and ammunition to the general public without restriction and without the requirement of registration.
2. We oppose the sale of firearms to persons who are mentally incompetent or demonstrated incorrigibles.
3. We support heavier penalties for crimes involving the use of firearms.

## **FISH AND GAME**

*Hunting and fishing is a personal right, subject to reasonable regulations and restrictions prescribed by law. The recognition of this right must not abridge any private or public property rights, as access to private and public property is a privilege and not a right. We support traditional manners and means used to take non-threatened species. The NH Fish and Game Department (Fish and Game) must manage wildlife while retaining the ability of farmers or their agents to shoot or trap animals damaging crops or livestock.*

1. We support the current NH Fish and Game Commission structure with each county having one commissioner that is a licensed hunter or fisherman in NH.
2. We support the Fish and Game Executive Director must be a hunter or trapper and demonstrate a sound understanding of the significant impact wildlife poses to agricultural crops and livestock.
3. We support RSA 207:26, enabling the killing of wildlife found in the act of damaging property.
4. We support the rights of all farmers, regardless of size, to defend their livestock and fowl from predators.
5. We oppose requiring the relocation of nuisance wildlife such as skunks and beavers.
6. We support Fish and Game consulting with landowners before releasing game birds and other animals on private land.
7. We support the Fish and Game Wildlife Damage Control Program (RSA 207:22-c).
8. We support increased funding for additional animal damage control officers, and animal damage control programs, including mandated compensation for wildlife damage to crops, livestock, and property.
9. We support Fish and Game paying for wildlife damage to crops on an exact loss basis, not on a dry matter basis.
10. We support the establishment of special permits, primitive weapon hunting zones and extended hunting seasons on and around agricultural land that suffers from wild animal damage.
11. We support the availability of depredation permits before damage occurs, issued within one working day, and permit holders being allowed to keep the animals provided proper disposal is assured.
12. We support Fish and Game conducting a survey of NH farmers to determine the full extent of damage to crops and livestock by game animals and then using the results to establish seasons and game taking limits.
13. We support the ability of landowners who post their land to participate in game damage programs.
14. We support the establishment of regulated large game harvesting areas for elk, fallow deer and red deer.

15. We support limiting Fish and Game officers' authority to enter property that is posted, unless there is probable cause of an illegal act within or an emergency.
16. We support the continued study and monitoring of the coyote population and resulting livestock damage by Fish and Game and support the implementation of control measures when a coyote problem is identified.
17. We support maintaining an open season on coyote hunting in NH.
18. We support the removal of the gray wolf from the state's endangered species list.
19. We support requiring landowner permission before a game camera, tree stand, or hunting blind can be placed on private property. The owners name and contact information must be affixed to the device.
20. We support an open season on raccoons, an extended crow hunt and extending the hunting season for non-migratory Canada Geese to include fall and winter months.
21. We support the pre-baiting of bear and allowing more than one bait station.
22. We support expanding the wild turkey season, increasing harvest numbers & bag limits, and shotgun hunting in the fall.
23. We support allowing farm property owners and family youth under 16 years old to take a deer, bear, and turkey of either sex on farm controlled premises during hunting season.
24. We support the continued testing of road kill and hunter harvested wild deer herd for Chronic Wasting Disease.
25. We oppose the discharging of firearms within 300 feet of operating agricultural equipment unless it is done by the equipment operator or designee.
26. We support regulating drone flying relative to flight at night and use as a tool to hunt.
27. We support requiring permission from a landowner if anyone wishes to use a drone on their property.

#### **FOOD SAFETY, HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

*Food safety concerns must be balanced with wholesomeness, availability, and affordability. As a matter of national, state, local, and individual security, all communities should encourage agricultural activities and practices. FDA Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) regulations must be applied equally to imported foods so that American farmers do not lose their markets and livelihoods to the economic hardship of government regulation.*

1. We support rules and regulations that enable farmers to sell directly to consumers.
2. We support DAMF continuing as the authorized agent of FDA to conduct required federally authorized inspections mandated under FSMA.
3. We support an appeal mechanism allowing farmers with a grievance relative to FSMA to have a hearing in front of the Commissioner of Agriculture.
4. We oppose the establishment of user fees, licensing fees, or other mandates compelling farmers to hire a third party to comply with federal or state food safety laws.
5. We support food safety education that emphasizes consumer responsibility along with producer responsibility.
6. We support reinstating the ability of cider makers to wholesale unpasteurized cider.
7. We oppose restrictive legislation interfering with the FDA registering veterinary medical products, including antibiotics. The registration and deregistration decisions should be made in a timely manner.
8. We support training of emergency response personnel in responding to accidents and emergencies, including training regarding preserving farm equipment and property and the use of warning lights and sirens in the presence of livestock.
9. We support driver education programs that include the proper use and recognition of legal hand signals used by operators of agricultural equipment.
10. We support the ability to lawfully display natural Christmas trees in public buildings and in business establishments.
11. We support a zone of concern by the state when a zoonotic disease detection has been made.

12. We support government agencies working together to control reportable diseases.

## **FORESTRY**

*Forest resource conservation and the forest industry are a vital part of NH's agricultural and natural resource economy. We encourage the use of native lumber. We support research for practical ways to utilize the vast amounts of low-grade wood fiber, waste wood, and forest residuals that, when harvested, improve the overall health and value of NH's forests. Since small holdings constitute a major part of commercial forestland, efforts to expand programs of advice and assistance for these owners will help maintain private forestland ownership.*

1. We support efforts to manage the Emerald Ash Borer.
2. We support education and better enforcement on the movement of firewood.
3. We support promoting sustainable forestry on both private and public lands.
4. We oppose more land in NH being given the wilderness designation.
5. We support the re-evaluation of currently designated wilderness areas. We urge that wilderness areas be managed with sound, multiple use principles.
6. We support continued timber harvest in the White Mountain National Forest.
7. We oppose the White Mountain National Forest being designated as a national park.
8. We oppose the use of the municipal site plan review process or ordinances to regulate woodlot management and restrict access for timber harvest.
9. We support clear cutting as a sound forestry practice when done according to BMP guidelines as recommended by the Forest and Lands Division of the DNCR.
10. We support the continued operation of the State Forest Nursery on a self-supporting basis.
11. We encourage Forests and Lands to formulate management plans for state owned forestry tracts to better manage government forestlands.
12. We support the NH Forest Fire Service and necessary funding for fire towers and air surveillance.
13. We support Internal Revenue Service regulations that allow woodland to be treated as a farm for inheritance purposes.
14. We support the recommendations and action plan pertaining to insurance, regulation, and energy of the NH Forest Industry Task Force.

## **GOVERNMENT OWNED PROPERTY**

*Government owned properties that are not available for public use should be required to bear their share of the cost of services provided by other government entities. Government entities acquiring property should be required to satisfy existing tax liens or other long-term indebtedness.*

1. We support priority for food and fiber production on government owned property.
2. We support state and county institutional farmland continuing as productive agricultural land.

## **INSURANCE**

*Participation in activities involving inherent risk should automatically indicate an acknowledgment of such risk and the acceptance of the responsibility for such risks by the participants and their legal guardians.*

1. We support revisions to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to address high premiums for farmers not in the exchange, the loss of the ability of Farm Bureau to have a group policy, and the requirement that seasonal foreign workers purchase health insurance when there are no economically feasible policies available.
2. We support tort reform that will cap insurance claims and establish a standard recommended settlement.
3. We support the elimination of, or limits to, "joint and several liability."

4. We oppose mandatory employer provided health insurance.
5. We support efforts to encourage health insurers to do business in NH.
6. We support reform of Workers' Compensation laws to encourage people to go back to work.
7. We support the development of a Workers' Compensation insurance policy that ensures an equitable minimum premium payment for agricultural enterprises.
8. We support enabling Workers' Compensation coverage of farm workers on very small farm operations, similar to the coverage provided incidental workers on a homeowner's policy.
9. We support amending crop insurance programs so that the value of lost feed quality and quantity can be recovered.
10. We support a state law limiting the liability of farmers providing agritourism activities to the public.

## **INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

*The economic health of the entire world depends upon mutually beneficial trade among nations. In order to reduce trade barriers among nations, coordinated USA efforts to strengthen monetary and trade policies should be continued. Imports of agricultural products should meet USA standards for similar products produced in the USA.*

## **LABOR**

*An adequate labor pool is critical to our farmers. Priority should be on hiring locally, but the ability to hire foreign labor legally is critical to our agricultural enterprises as well.*

1. We oppose an increase in the federal minimum wage and the adoption of a state minimum wage.
2. We oppose amendments to state youth employment laws and federal child labor laws that restrict opportunities for young people in agricultural employment.
3. We oppose state and federal labor laws that restrict opportunities for volunteers in agricultural enterprises.
4. We support reform of the H-2A agricultural guest worker so that all agricultural enterprises can make use of the program.
5. We oppose holding the employer legally responsible for employee status verification if they have been presented with fraudulent documents.
6. We support the tightening of qualifications for unemployment compensation payments.
7. We oppose increases in unemployment compensation benefits and extension of the law to include farm workers.
8. We oppose unemployment compensation payments to people on strike.
9. We oppose a collective bargaining act and subsidized programs that seek to organize farm workers.
10. We oppose agreements that require employees to join unions and pay dues and fees for employment.
11. We oppose changes to overtime labor laws for agricultural workers.

## **LAND USE**

*The protection of private property rights is basic to the function of democracy. Every individual landowner must have the right to appeal from the enforcement of a government land use mandate. Data used in land use studies must be developed from within the affected area. Zoning decisions should be made at the local level of government. Zoning should allow for higher density units, such as cluster zoning, high rises, and condominiums, with provisions for preservation of farmland. In order to keep farms viable, local governments must look favorably on the retail aspects of agriculture, including agritourism activities. Working farms are an integral part of a town's character. Maintaining the availability of open space land for agricultural use should be a priority.*

*Agritourism is an important part of many farm business profiles and should stay by statutory definition, as a part of the state definition of agriculture (RSA 21:34-a, II (5)). Farms need to exercise due care and caution when planning agritourism events, taking into consideration many factors, including but not limited to parking, sanitation, and noise. Municipal ordinances and laws should not unreasonably*

*regulate agriculture in its many forms, including agritourism (RSA 672:1, III-b).*

1. We support creative tax incentives to promote environmentally sound agricultural land stewardship.
2. We support the state definition of agriculture (RSA 21:34-a) and urge its adoption by municipalities.
3. We oppose local ordinances that restrict the viability of agricultural and forestry enterprises when the operation of such enterprises are operated according to Best Management Practices (BMP) guidelines.
4. We support providing information on the “Right-to-Farm” law to any purchaser of real estate abutting agricultural land (RSA 432:32-35).
5. We support continued state funding for the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program.
6. We support continued funding of the Acquisition of Agricultural Land Development Rights Law (RSA 432:18 - 432:31-a).
7. We support the concept of renewable, limited duration, resource protection easements.
8. We support allowing for the expansion and change of an existing, non-conforming agricultural use.
9. We support the creation of a protective buffer area zoning ordinance within new residential development in order to reduce conflict with agricultural uses.
10. We support exempting demountable greenhouses from building code and building permit requirements.
11. We support exempting production agriculture as defined in RSA 21:34-a, I from the municipal site plan review process.
12. We support the preservation of prime agricultural lands when sighting commercial solar, wind, and other alternative energy installations.

## **LIVESTOCK**

*Livestock production is integral to preserving open space. Animal care through the use of widely accepted best management practices and the adoption of preventative health measures will serve to protect both the livestock industry and public health. Livestock owners should establish a herd health management program with their veterinarian.*

*The availability of slaughter and processing facilities, particularly those offering USDA or equivalent inspection, are critical to a viable commercial livestock industry. Processing and marketing options and facilities, a skilled workforce, and the continued promotion and marketing of locally grown livestock products will support, maintain, and enhance the livestock industry in NH.*

1. We support efforts to increase public understanding of the merits of modern animal production practices and their relation to biosecurity, food safety, food supply, and public health.
2. We support the State Veterinarian or his designated licensed veterinarian having the sole authority to make a probable cause determination for the seizure of livestock.
3. We support expanding meat and livestock processing opportunities for New Hampshire producers.
4. We support enabling licensed veterinarians the authority to serve as inspectors in slaughter facilities.
5. We support on-farm slaughter under veterinary inspection being uniformly eligible for direct sales.
6. We support allowing the retail sale of meat and food products of non-amenable species slaughtered on-farm under veterinarian inspection and ante-mortem examination in accordance with RSA 427:2-a and processed at a facility that is eligible to conduct custom exempt activities.
7. We support the legalization of all on-farm humane slaughter options.
8. We support the ability of a farmer to directly market a limited amount of uninspected meat each year.
9. We support allowing the interstate sale of state inspected meat.
10. We support farmers being able to retail sale animals slaughtered under USDA inspection and processed at a state licensed facility.
11. We support the USDA allowing states that do not have a state meat or poultry inspection program to join the Cooperative Interstate Shipment (CIS) program.
12. We support the state of New Hampshire joining the USDA CIS program.
13. We support implementing a long term training program to provide a skilled workforce for the

- livestock and poultry processing industry in New England.
14. We oppose further consolidation of the meat packing industry.
  15. We support the exemption of any animal identification system from the Right to Know Law.
  16. We support incentives that attract large animal veterinarians to underserved areas.
  17. We support having the DAMF and the Veterinary Licensing Board work with Canada to encourage veterinarians to practice in northern NH.
  18. We support the creation of a classification for large animal care technicians who, when working under a licensed veterinarian, can provide routine large animal veterinary care.
  19. We support veterinary schools giving priority consideration to applicants who have livestock experience.
  20. We support NH being identified on both the state and federal level as a state “in need” of food animal veterinarians and/or as a state that has a shortage of food animal veterinarians.
  21. We support vaccination of all domestic animals and livestock for rabies.
  22. We support farm vaccination records containing a producer signed affidavit as accepted proof of vaccination.
  23. We support testing for pseudorabies in swine.
  24. We support increased funding to the DAMF for continuation of the tuberculosis testing program.
  25. We support expanding the NH brucellosis, tuberculosis, and voluntary Johne’s disease testing program to include all domesticated animals and livestock that are potential carriers.
  26. We support the US Animal Health Associations Johne's disease Herd Certification Program.
  27. We support a voluntary Johne's disease testing program based on USDA's voluntary Johne's disease Herd Status Program.
  28. We continue to support research of Johne's disease and urge producers to work with the State Veterinarian toward a Johne's disease-free state.
  29. We support continuing the federal Scrapie eradication program.
  30. We support funding for the development of a live animal test for Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies.
  31. We support priority funding of a state Chronic Wasting Disease program to comply with USDA rules for the importation and exportation of deer and elk.
  32. We support banning the import of live animals or animal products from countries with animals infected with foot-and-mouth disease.
  33. We support New England regional cooperation to create one standard for testing requirements for interstate transfer of livestock.
  34. We support the right of an owner to euthanize their own animals.
  35. We support the judicious use of antibiotics in all species.
  36. We support the use of antibiotics in food animals until sufficient evidence proves that treatment results in disease or harm to humans.
  37. We support the continuation of research into antibiotic use in domestic animals and the overall implications of the use or non-use.
  38. We support FDA regulation of animal antibiotics based on sound scientific risk analysis on an individual product basis rather than a product class basis.
  39. We encourage farmers to participate in livestock medication use data surveys.
  40. We support the option to use federally approved feed additives, hormones, and other animal health care products for livestock and poultry production.
  41. We support DAMF leading disease outbreak planning and response, including disease-specific plans for foot-and-mouth disease, avian influenza, and others.
  42. We support the education of livestock producers concerning biosecurity.
  43. We support the DAMF as the sole regulator of farmed deer, defined as livestock under state law.
  44. We support recognizing the production of farmed strains of buffalo or bison, llamas, alpacas, emus, ostriches, yaks, elk (*Cervus canadensis*), fallow deer (*Dama dama*), red deer (*Cervus elephus*), reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus*), and equines as agricultural industries at the federal level with full

benefits of traditional agriculture extended to these industries. This includes production insurance, livestock compensation and other livestock programs, health certification, loan guarantees, and expedited approvals. Research should be conducted to approve animal health products for use in these species.

45. We support the raising, harvesting and selling of domesticated wildlife.
46. We support having assessments for meat promotions collected only at the time of slaughter.
47. We are opposed to any increased assessments in the Beef Checkoff program.
48. We support the continuation of traditional recreational, promotional, and educational use of livestock species at public and private venues including, but not limited to: livestock exhibitions, petting farms, pig scrambles, pulling contests, horse & pony rides, and sleigh & wagon rides.
49. We support legislation limiting liability for display of farm animals.
50. We oppose limiting the supply to farmers of an animal medication, such as Ivermectin, when use of its human counterpart as prescribed by a physician is being discouraged.
51. We support a county funded animal control officer position in each county.

## **MAPLE**

*Should the Asian Longhorn Beetle be found in the state, every effort should be made to eradicate it to a level of least economic harm. The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service should be funded adequately to educate the public and provide for entomologists and other specialists to protect the interest of the maple industry.*

1. We support the preservation and management of maple stands for the purpose of maple sap production on state and federal owned lands.
2. We support an expedited and simplified process for the use of federal forestland by maple producers. Environmental impact studies and public hearings should not be required for each site. Tap lease rates should reflect market rates.
3. We support a reduction in the minimum diameter for tapping maple trees from 12" to 10" on state and federal managed land where 5/16" diameter tap holes are drilled.

## **MARKETING**

*We favor a free enterprise system for establishing market price by supply and demand.*

1. We support the ability of farmers to form agricultural supply and marketing cooperatives as allowed by the Capper-Volstead Act.
2. We support farmers' markets and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) entities.

## **MEDIA**

1. We encourage public officials and the media to use proper terminology when reporting on diseases and other issues such as biotechnology, including genetic engineering and other related products and foods.
2. We support reporting based on proven scientific evidence of climate change and global warming.

## **MOTOR VEHICLES LAW AND TRANSPORTATION**

*Improvements to the existing highway system in NH should have minimum impact on agricultural land. The NH constitution requires that all revenues derived from highway user taxes and fees be used exclusively for the construction and maintenance of public highways.*

*All trucks registered as Farm or Agricultural should be exempt from the federal Uniform Commercial Code when traveling out of state the same way that they are exempt when traveling in state.*

*Over width farm equipment should be allowed to move on a trailer seven days a week on all highways.*

1. We support the continued use of Agricultural and Farm Plates.
2. We support enforcement of the laws for vehicles registered with agricultural plates.
3. We support an exemption for Agricultural, Farm, and Farm Tractor registrations from additional assessments designed specifically to raise funds for state highway construction.
4. We support an exemption for vehicles with Agricultural Plates from the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Act.
5. We oppose the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Act requirement of schooling to obtain a Commercial Driver's License.
6. We support exempting drivers of farm trucks and farm implement combinations from commercial driver's license requirements.
7. We oppose further restrictions on the operation of farm vehicles and machinery on highways.
8. We support having all vehicle registrations and plates be done at the town level.
9. We oppose state law requiring all non-U.S. citizen workers obtain a NH driver's license after 60 days.
10. We support reciprocity for the length of a worker's contract for H-2A program agricultural guest workers holding a driver's license in their home country, or an international driver's permit.
11. We support the loss of license and mandatory restitution for any person caught maliciously damaging crops, animals, or equipment with an Off Highway Recreational Vehicle (OHRV). We support Fish and Game paying for damages not covered by restitution out of funds coming from the registration of the vehicles and if necessary, fees should be increased to cover these costs.
12. We support the organization of OHRV clubs to continue the education of OHRV users regarding the safe and courteous operation of OHRVs.
13. We oppose the easing of restrictions on the public use of OHRVs on private property.
14. We support the exemption of agricultural products and by-products from seasonal load limits and No-Thru Trucking on NH roadways.
15. We support the establishment of an emergency government fund available for the repair or replacement of bridges condemned and closed in NH.
16. We oppose requiring surety bonds for temporary access to state highways.
17. We support the modification of RSA 265:104 (Approaching Horses) to include a maximum of 10 mph speed limit.

#### **NH DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, MARKETS & FOOD (DAMF)**

*NH has a proud agricultural history. Given regulatory opportunity and the economic climate to do so, agricultural production in NH can be increased to provide not only a beneficial use of available land but also increased nutritional and economic benefits for all its citizens. DAMF must remain intact as an autonomous department and the regulatory authority for all aspects of agriculture, agricultural markets, and food. This is essential to assure the safety of agricultural products for consumers and to protect the interests of farmers. The Commissioner of Agriculture should have experience in production agriculture.*

1. We support DAMF efforts to focus on its core mission.
2. We support the appointment of the Commissioner of Agriculture for a five-year term.
3. We support the *Weekly Market Bulletin*, Farm & Forest Exposition, Farms of Distinction program, and other information sources sponsored by the DAMF.
4. We support DAMF funding adequate staffing in the Division of Plant Industry to combat invasive species.
5. We support strict enforcement of organic farm certification standards and the native produce advertising law (RSA 426:5) by allowing DAMF to levy administrative fines for violations.
6. We support DAMF providing full organic certification services.
7. We support state funding to DAMF to provide for adequate personnel to inspect bee, cider, livestock, maple, poultry, and ornamental horticulture products and operations. DAMF and not the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) should oversee inspection.
8. We support efforts by the DAMF to promote agricultural tourism and locally grown agricultural



products.

9. We support annual inspection and certification of on farm scales and support having it done by the DAMF.
10. We support more regional scales testing clinics by the DAMF.
11. We support transferring the regulation of composting poultry and livestock to the DAMF.
12. We support the Commissioner of Agriculture utilizing the Agricultural Advisory Board according to RSA 425:23.
13. We support the Agricultural Advisory Board meeting and recommending a nominee for the position of Commissioner of Agriculture, Markets, and Food.
14. We oppose across the board percentage budget cuts and hiring freezes in the DAMF.

## **NUTRITION AND FOOD PROGRAMS**

1. We support the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)/WIC Farmer' Market Nutrition Program, the Commodity Supplemental Food Program for seniors and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – formerly known as the Food Stamps Program - and support including these programs at all farm stands.
2. We support simplifying the SNAP Electronic Benefit Transfer system for farmers' markets and farm stand operations.
3. We support providing extra surveillance on WIC, SNAP, and similar food programs to ensure our dollars are helping families who truly need help.
4. We support the NH Farm to School program.
5. We support the freedom of communities to determine the food available in their schools, but urge that nutritionally well-balanced meals and snacks be served with a special emphasis on serving locally grown food products.
6. We support placing vending machines with NH products in schools offering milk, fruits, and nutritious snack foods.

## **PATRIOTISM**

1. We support keeping the words "Under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance and "In God We Trust" on US currency.
2. We support the sanctity of the American Flag.
3. We encourage everyone to fly the flag according to proper flag etiquette.

## **POULTRY**

1. We support continuing federal exemption limits for on-farm slaughter of poultry and encourage self-inspecting towns to support the exemption.
2. We oppose regulations that exceed the federal Poultry Product Inspection Act.
3. We support the expansion of egg and other food handling education programs for commercial food handlers.
4. We oppose requiring refrigerated transportation of fresh eggs when they are moved locally as defined by RSA 426:5 (Use of Words "Native," "Local," and "Our Own.").
5. We support the education of poultry growers concerning biosecurity.

## **PRODUCT LABELING**

*Where federal law requires labeling of food and produce, individual states should adopt those policies and not impose stricter regulations. States should not adopt product labeling regulations for which the federal government has no requirement.*

1. We support market-based labeling and promotion to identify unique product characteristics or production methods.
2. We oppose deceptive labeling.
3. We oppose the false labeling or “greenwashing” of non-meat products as having less impact on the environment.
4. We support the voluntary labeling of genetically engineered products.
5. We oppose the labeling of plant-based beverages as milk.
6. We support enabling dairy products to be sold “% fat free.”
7. We support the definition of meat as “any edible portion of livestock, poultry, game animals, or fish.”
8. We oppose labeling and marketing of cell cultured products derived from livestock or poultry and plant-based products as meat.
9. We oppose requiring added sugar labeling on maple and honey products.
10. We oppose changes to USDA’s definition of “spring lamb” and “genuine spring lamb”.

## **PROMOTION**

*Viable agricultural and forestry industries provide an environment that is responsible for a quality of life that benefits the state's other leading industries. The tourism industry in the state is dependent upon the open space and vistas provided by agriculture.*

1. We support the production, sale, and consumption of locally grown agricultural products.
2. We support tax supported organizations utilizing local food.
3. We support the use of temporary signs for agricultural enterprises on state highways and local roads.
4. We support a rule change to enable orchards and other farms providing services to the motoring public to take part in the state Department of Transportation’s Tourist Oriented Directional Signs program.
5. We support increased funding of agricultural development and promotional efforts focusing on the open space that agriculture and forestry provide to all.
6. We support the continued partnership the DAMF and the NH Division of Travel and Tourism Development have in promoting NH agriculture and the state.
7. We support funding for the promotion of local agricultural products that is on a par with funding provided in our neighboring states.

## **PROPERTY RIGHTS**

*The most effective stewardship of our natural resources can be obtained through private ownership of land. Government ownership, supervision, and regulation should be kept to a minimum to protect our environment. We recognize for effective zoning and planning historical land use rights may have to be abridged, however, any such abridgment should be solely for the general welfare and not for the benefit of individual or special interest. The principles behind individual ownership of land and rights inherent therein are the same whether the ownership is a suburban house lot or a farmer's fields and forests.*

*No one who builds or purchases property near a farm should be able to force change in the day-to-day operations on that farm.*

*Easements, non-highway rights-of-way, and land protection acquisitions should be made between ready, willing, and able buyers and sellers and not through eminent domain. Where eminent domain takings of farmland result in awarding land damages, compensation should include reasonable access to all property and water supplies. A reasonable amount of time for the removal of crops, gravel, soil, and timber should be provided. Payments should be based on the total devaluation of a farm business. Federal and state agencies should be required to review their actions to ensure that unnecessary takings of property do not occur.*

*When government regulation constitutes a taking, landowners should be reimbursed for the loss of use of land or decrease in property value and rights, including the loss of riparian rights.*

1. We oppose eminent domain land taking except for clearly justified public infrastructure purposes.
2. We oppose the taking of land by eminent domain for forestry, parkland, wildlife management, recreational use, or any private use. We oppose the use of eminent domain to take productive agricultural land as landfill sites.
3. We oppose the use of eminent domain to gain rights of way for utilities on or under land protected by a conservation easement that restrict the use of the land for agricultural purposes.
4. We support a rewrite of the Endangered Species Act so that biodiversity is preserved and endangered species are protected through protecting representative ecosystems. The preferred method of protection should be through incentives to landowners. If additional protective methods are required, which result in the taking of property rights, landowners should be compensated at fair market value.
5. We oppose the listing of an endangered species if the animal is at a sustainable population elsewhere on the continent.
6. We oppose the addition of the Atlantic salmon to the Endangered Species List.
7. We oppose the listing of the Canada Lynx to the Endangered Species List.
8. We oppose the reintroduction of the timber wolf to the northeastern USA.
9. We support requiring written landowner permission prior to any publication of information about a landowner's property. A person involved in conducting a survey should be required to get written permission from a landowner before entering private property to gather information.
10. We support the right of property owners to be made fully aware of the uses of Natural Heritage Inventory information obtained from their land and to have the ability to control the distribution of any information concerning their property. A Natural Heritage Inventory of a property should only be obtained with the consent of the landowner.
11. We support legislation that prohibits the publishing and distribution of maps and other materials promoting the unauthorized use of privately owned land.
12. We support the right of landowners to protect their land from loss or destruction by rivers and streams without a costly and lengthy permitting process.
13. We oppose the "dumping" of storm water runoff resulting from development or highway construction on to farmland and other private property.
14. We oppose holding landowners responsible for the cleanup or removal of material, toxic or otherwise, placed on their property without their consent.
15. We support the right of landowners to access their property served by a Class VI road and build non-residential agricultural support structures on property served only by Class VI roads.
16. We support requiring an individual recreating on the private property of another identify themselves to the landowner or landowner's agent upon request.
17. We support requiring documented landowner permission for the harvesting of any wild or domestic crop on private or public property.

## **SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING**

*The ability to use manure on our farming operations must be maintained.*

1. We oppose the classification of manure as hazardous waste.
2. We oppose the classification of milk as hazardous waste.
3. We support continued research on the disposal and treatment of hazardous waste.
4. We urge the NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) to improve existing programs for the safe disposal of hazardous materials including agricultural chemicals and containers.
5. We support recycling programs.
6. We support research and development into the uses and markets for recyclable materials.
7. We support research into the recycling of agricultural plastic.
8. We support enforcement measures to control the discarding of rubbish along highways.
9. We support continued exploration of alternative methods for waste disposal other than landfills.
10. We support efforts to educate the public about the nutrient resource management benefits of

spreading manure and other organic residuals.

## **STATE and COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

*Small legislative districts that conform to the boundaries of a single town best serve the tradition of self-governance in NH. When multi-town districts must be created, towns of similar size, character, and interest should be aggregated.*

*"Agricultural activities are an economically beneficial and worthwhile feature of the NH economy and landscape and shall not be discouraged or eliminated by use of municipal planning and zoning powers or the unreasonable interpretation of such powers." (RSA 672:1 III-b).*

*"Any agricultural use...may without restriction be expanded, altered to meet changing technology or markets, or changed to another agricultural use, as set forth in RSA 21:34-a, so long as such expansion, alteration, or change complies with all federal and state laws, regulations, and rules, including best management practices..." (RSA 674:32-b).*

1. We oppose "Home Rule."
2. We support state regulation of agriculture preempting local regulation where necessary to ensure equal treatment under the law from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.
3. We support state regulatory agencies first providing education and warnings instead of issuing fines and fees for a first offense.
4. We support NH's "Right-to-Farm" law, RSAs 432:33, 34 and 35.
5. We support prohibiting the State Building Code, or any local amendment, from including a mandatory fire sprinkler system requirement for residential construction and agricultural buildings.
6. We support plumbing codes that allow farmers to do their own plumbing on their farms.
7. We support an arbitration process for a property owner to contest a local code enforcement officer's decision.
8. We support a return to biennial sessions of the Legislature.
9. We support state aid for NH agricultural fairs.
10. We oppose unfunded state mandates.
11. We oppose new or increased fees for inspection, registration, or licensing that affect the sale, processing, or production of agricultural products in NH that are not reasonably related to the cost of the service rendered by the agency levying the fee.
12. We oppose government attempts to restrict, control, or remove a landowners' right to control public access to their land.
13. We support government and private sector statements of privacy and information disclosure policies.
14. Where state law requires written permission for recreation on private property, forms should be provided by the appropriate state agency at no cost.
15. We support reasonable exemptions for agriculture being included in the definition of junkyards.
16. We support a consumer "Lemon Law" that includes new agricultural machinery and new motor vehicles sold in the state of NH.
17. We support ensuring that a State Forester be appointed and that the position be maintained through the DNCR as an appointed position, not an elected one.
18. We oppose having the level of compliance to food safety standards of specific food establishments published in any public media form, be it by symbol, percent, or word, by DHHS prior to the business having a chance to correct the problems and there being a follow up inspection.
19. We support the work and funding of the Conservation Districts.
20. We support an adequate appropriation for the State Conservation Committee so that it can fulfill its statutory functions.
21. We oppose the selling of commodities produced with state or county tax dollars being sold below local prevailing prices.
22. We support drought assistance for all affected farms.

## **TAXATION**

*Current Use assessment is a valid method of taxation, not an abatement, and is the foundation of NH's working farm and forest landscape and the cornerstone in maintaining the state's open space lands. Open space lands should be assessed at a value reflecting the lands' ability to generate income from agricultural and forestry products.*

*Property tax enhancement factors must be well defined, fully documented, and transparent to taxpayers; such factors must be consistently applied throughout a municipality. Municipal assessing officials should be prohibited from assessing a farm structure or the land under it as a commercial business use when it is used in the operation of the farm as defined in RSA 21:34-a.*

*If the Legislature determines a broad base tax is necessary, we will only support a tax that has a constitutional allocation of 100% of its revenues dedicated to the relief of property taxes in the cities and towns to be distributed in an equitable manner. If a state income tax is enacted, we believe an increase in rate should require a constitutional amendment.*

*Federal income tax laws should encourage savings, investment, education, and research with no net increase in taxes. The most efficient use of taxpayers' money is through the frugal exercise of government responsibilities at the lowest practical level of government.*

1. We support the NH Current Use Law (RSA 79-A).
2. We oppose increasing the 10% Land Use Change Tax (LUCT) and any efforts that deviate from the founding principal of Current Use.
3. We oppose assessing the LUCT when agricultural production equipment and temporary facilities are located on land enrolled in Current Use.
4. We oppose the assessment of the LUCT for all utility lines servicing a non-taxable structure.
5. We oppose state compensation to municipalities for tax revenues lost due to Current Use assessment.
6. We oppose changing Current Use law in a way which would penalize landowners for posting their land.
7. We support the option to use the Soil Potential Index (SPI) process of assessing cropland.
8. We support Current Use assessment that encourages open farmland and not unmanaged reforestation.
9. We oppose including additional recreational activities in the Current Use assessments 20% recreational adjustment allowed under RSA 79-A:4 II.
10. We support farmers who adopt nutrient management plans, IPM scouting services, soil conservation plans, and other farm and crop management strategies qualifying for a lower Current Use assessment similar to the lower assessment forest landowners receive for developing a forest management plan.
11. We support land on which containerized horticultural crops are grown qualifying for Current Use assessment so long as the intent of Current Use is maintained.
12. We support assessment of land taken out of Current Use for the construction of agricultural buildings being on no more than the maximum of that land's square footage percentage of a house lot in that town.
13. When defining land of less than 10 acres for eligibility in the Current Use program, we support amending Cub 304.01(b)(3) to add the sale of livestock in addition to crops.
14. We support the state standardizing property tax bills so that bills are readily understood, free of the need for additional computation by the taxpayer, and clearly define the Current Use assessment portion.
15. We support repeal of the estate tax.
16. We support repeal of the Business Enterprise Tax.
17. We oppose applying the Business Profits Tax to capital gains, particularly for the sale of livestock.
18. We oppose a tax on gross income, a general sales tax, a land value tax, a capital gains tax, a value added tax, and the statewide property tax.
19. We support the Meals and Rooms (Rentals) Tax being distributed to municipalities as originally established in 1967.
20. We support exploring ways, other than additional taxation, to cover the costs of an adequate

education that helps to relieve the burden placed on local communities while improving the quality of education.

21. We support determining the cost of an adequate education prior to the institution of a long-term tax to fund state education aid to local school districts.
22. We support an exemption from the Interest and Dividends Tax for installment interest income derived from the sale of operating farms.
23. We support reducing the period in which transfers of property are considered to be "in contemplation of death" from three years to one year.
24. We support use of Real Estate Transfer Tax funds for the preservation of agricultural land.
25. We oppose taxation of tower silos, bunker silos and manure storage areas.
26. We support RSA 79-D, Discretionary Preservation Easements, allowing municipalities to reduce the tax burden on the restoration and preservation of historical agricultural structures.
27. We support an exemption or the reduction of property taxes on agricultural buildings primarily used for the production of agricultural products.
28. We support RSA 79-F, Taxation of Farm Structures and Land Under Farm Structures, enabling the appraisal of qualifying farm structures for no more than their replacement costs less depreciation and the land under qualifying farm structures at no more than 10 percent of its fair market value.
29. We support the elimination of property taxes on high depreciation, single use agricultural structures, such as greenhouses, in order to allow NH growers to effectively compete with growers in surrounding states.
30. We support enabling an agricultural tax exemption from property taxes on land leased from public entities.
31. We oppose percentage-based methods of gasoline taxation.
32. We support the off highway and agricultural vehicle fuel tax exemption.
33. We support using motor fuel taxes and highway user fees for government expenses related to highway construction and maintenance only.
34. We support registrations of farm vehicles not be affected by a proposed road usage fee.
35. We support tax credits for on-farm alternative energy production and pollution control devices and facilities.
36. We support tax free Internet access.
37. We support repeal of the tax on the tuition forgiveness program for veterinary school graduates.

**United States Department of Agriculture (USDA): Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)**

*Federal farm policy should be evaluated regionally.*

1. We support efforts to decrease agriculture's dependency on federal support programs.
2. We support amending disaster assistance programs so that farmers would be required to pay crop insurance and Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) payments only on those crops they wish to receive disaster payments on.
3. We support improving NAP coverage by offering a larger number of insurable crops that are insured based on individual plantings rather than whole-farm acreage, at prices that reflect their true market value in our area.
4. We support having FSA gather data on program crops based on regional equity rather than national pricing.
5. We support funding for FSA and NRCS cost share programs and technical support services.
6. We support adequate Conservation Technical Assistance funding to cover administrative and engineering support for cost-share projects from NRCS.
7. We support increasing qualified, permanent staffing in NRCS offices.
8. We support NRCS administering payments for its cost-share programs.
9. We support greater local control in setting priorities for USDA programs.

10. We support enabling NRCS cost share programs to assist farmers with controlling Smooth Bedstraw.
11. We support water resource development, such as ponds for irrigation and livestock, being included in USDA programs.
12. We support the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program.
13. We support removing farm size and funding restrictions for NRCS services.
14. We support expediting the process for determining NRCS funding eligibility.
15. We support a formula for Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) funding to compensate agricultural land owners for crop damage that has been incurred as a result of EQIP program wildlife habitat enhancement on neighboring property.
16. We support earlier mowing dates in order to discourage the establishment of invasive species when wildlife habitat enhancement occurs under EQIP.
17. We support NRCS project timelines beginning on the date a farmer accepts a plan, not on the date a farm becomes eligible for a program.
18. We support NRCS establishing a policy of completing technical plans within three months of a farmer's eligibility.
19. We support NRCS accepting state licenses as proof of qualification, without further testing or requirements, to be a Technical Service Providers (TSPs)
20. We support a change to NRCS regulations to prevent TSPs from requiring farmers to pre-pay or assign conservation payments prior to work being rendered.
21. We support allowing farmers to write their own NRCS plan, provided NRCS criteria is met and no state license is required to perform the service.
22. We support the NRCS soil health monitoring initiative.
23. We support Animal Feeding Operation (AFO) regulations that are implemented incrementally with farmer input.
24. We support USDA funding for the Rural Energy for America Program and also to include cost share funding for on-farm renewable energy systems (geothermal, solar, wind etc.) in EQIP.
25. We support a USDA program to increase the amount of privately owned, unimproved land brought into agricultural production.
26. We support Resource Conservation and Development areas setting their priorities based on local needs.
27. We support participation in the Census of Agriculture and National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) surveys and encourage farms to report accurately.
28. We support funding from the NASS, state Departments of Agriculture, and other funding sources to continue regional fruit and vegetable surveys.
29. We support increased funding for natural resource and conservation activity in the AmeriCorps program.
30. We support all commodity Checkoff programs being funded and administered at the industry level.
31. We support USDA planning for a critical supply of animal use vaccines, antibiotics, antiparasitics, and other essential animal health products to be produced domestically.

**UNIVERSITY SYSTEM of NEW HAMPSHIRE (USNH) and UNH COLLEGE OF LIFE SCIENCES AND AGRICULTURE (COLSA)**

*Agriculture must remain an integral part of both the college and its name. Programming should reflect the present and future needs of agriculture in the state with priority given to research programs and services directly benefiting New England farmers at the NH the Agricultural Experiment Station and NH Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.*

*The administration of UNH must recognize the integral importance of agriculture and foods to the state and region and its central role within the University through COLSA. The trustees and the administration of UNH must provide adequate, stable funding to support COLSA's agricultural mission and to fill faculty positions in agricultural sciences.*

*Animal agriculture must be maintained at UNH. An adequate and diverse education to students*

*interested in livestock management and veterinary services at COLSA must be provided.*

*One of the major goals of any update to the campus master plan at UNH should be to reaffirm and strengthen the long-standing commitment to its Land Grant mission.*

1. We support an emphasis on the agricultural component of the Land Grant mission.
2. We oppose conversion of UNH farmland to non-agricultural uses.
3. We support funding in the USNH capital budget for the Biological Sciences Initiative, devoted to the renovation of Spaulding Hall, a building critical to agricultural education and research at UNH.
4. We support adequate and dedicated state and federal funding for the NH Agricultural Experiment Station and the NH Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.
5. We support additional long-term baseline resources of staff and funding for the NH Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory so that it may have sufficient baseline resources to become accredited and thus continue to provide important services to the state and region.
6. We support continued efforts and corresponding ongoing funding to obtain accreditation and membership of the UNH Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory with the National Animal Health Laboratory Network.
7. We support a close working relationship between COLSA, NH Agricultural Experiment Station, and UNHCE re-affirming the original goals of the Land Grant mission and implemented through the Hatch Act (funding agricultural research), Smith-Lever Act (establishing Cooperative Extension) and McIntire-Stennis Act (funding forestry research). Educational and research efforts should focus on those needed by NH's farm and forest communities.
8. We support the New England Land Grant colleges sharing resources to continue quality agricultural curricula, research and UNHCE programs.
9. We support reciprocal tuition agreements enabling students to attend an out-of-state college for their agricultural specialty at their home state tuition rate, in instances where their specialty is not offered at their home state institution.
10. We support reduced tuition for NH residents at the USNH.
11. We support 50% of any increase in funding being allocated towards tuition assistance for NH students.
12. We support the state and USNH restoring funding in COLSA, NH Agricultural Experiment Station, and UNHCE line items in the USNH budget to a level equal to or greater than FY 2009-10 funding adjusted for inflation. The COLSA and NH Agricultural Experiment Station budgets include the NH Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory, Thompson School of Applied Science, and all the UNH farms.

## **WATER RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATION**

*NH water use policy must uphold the riparian principle, where all landowners whose property is adjacent to a body of water (including groundwater) have the established property right to make reasonable use of that water. Administrative rules and permits granted by DES amount to incremental steps toward prior appropriation of water that may limit traditional agricultural uses.*

*Clean water in a bountiful supply is fundamental to successful agriculture. We understand the importance of maintaining the integrity of water resources. Unreasonable regulations must not be placed on agricultural operations managed in a responsible manner. Irrigation during dry periods is an essential agricultural practice. Special consideration must be given to water use for agriculture, public drinking and sanitary needs. We are active participants in efforts to conserve water, and encourage farmers to meter and document their water use.*

*Farm and forest landowners should be educated and informed regarding the ecological value of vernal pools which may be on their property.*

1. We support developing the data needed to make informed choices regarding the water resources of our state.
2. We support removal of agricultural water use reporting requirements in the state of NH.



3. We support increased releases of state waters from lakes and reservoirs during low flow critical periods in order to assure adequate water for irrigation.
4. We oppose water resource management plan ordinances that would unduly restrict normal agricultural practices.
5. We support mandatory compensation of farmland owners for the value of the land and for the loss of future income from that land as a result of negative impact of the passage of a water resource management plan ordinance.
6. We support the exploration of an agricultural exemption for large groundwater withdrawal permitting to provide for flexibility in operational needs on a limited time during the growing season.
7. We support flood control by numerous small dams and water conservation in the tributaries.
8. We oppose the construction of large flood control and hydroelectric dams that destroy agricultural land.
9. We oppose the repurposing of flood control dams to achieve other objectives.
10. We oppose the deliberate breaching of dams in NH if it will adversely affect farm operations above or below the dam.
11. We support a federal wetlands definition that excludes prior converted cropland from regulation, clarifies that normal agricultural practices are exempt from individual permit requirements, classifies wetlands by value and function, and requires compensation to landowners for loss of economic use of private property.
12. We oppose regulations that prohibit farmers from managing existing wet meadows intended for agricultural use.
13. We support regulations allowing farming on wetlands where the ecological value of that wetland will not be substantially reduced by agriculture.
14. We support regulations that allow farmers to build farm road stream crossings by using BMP guidelines without being required to follow the procedures required for road building for property development.
15. We support regulations that exempt minimum impact wetland projects from permitting.
16. We oppose regulations requiring mandatory wetlands mitigation.
17. We support regulations that allow the cleaning of existing ditches, ponds, water holes, and farm brooks without a dredge and fill permit.
18. We support emergency agriculture and forestry wetlands permits being valid for a minimum of 30 days and available equally for land, roads, and buildings.
19. We support the protection of ecologically important wetlands through a program of purchasing of easements or of the property at fair market value.
20. We oppose prime wetlands designations (RSA 482-A:15).
21. We oppose any new regulations being imposed on farm and forest activities provided BMP guidelines are currently being followed.
22. We oppose local permitting for the storage, transportation and spreading of manure.
23. We support regulations permitting the land application of biosolids, septage, short paper fiber, wood ash, composted waste, and other organic residual material when applied according to a site utilization management plan which outlines BMP guidelines and loading limits according to standards set by the DAMF or DES.
24. We support regulations that assign the liability for soil and water contamination to property resulting from the spreading of tested and approved organic residual material to the generator of that material.
25. We support regulations that hold the state liable for damages to abutting property that may arise from a septic system or well for which DES has granted a permit or waiver of regulation.
26. We support the objective delineation of shorelines in confirmation with the federal Coastal Zone Management Act, based on the best available data for sediment and nutrient transport for the soil type and slope.
27. We oppose regulations that hold farmers liable for the contamination of wells or groundwater by fertilizers provided that they have been applied according to BMP guidelines.

28. We support regulations requiring fossil fuel burning power plants to incorporate all available methods that minimize the discharge of air pollutants of all kinds, including those compounds that contribute to the development of acid rain.
29. We support regulations that allow the open burning of brush, stumps and wood waste in rural areas.
30. We support regulations that exempt farmers from the Clean Air Act when purchasing bulk grain at the mill and transporting it on their own vehicle.
31. We oppose regulations relative to “fugitive dust” and other “fugitive emissions” from agricultural operations.
32. We support efforts to engage farmers in discussions related to carbon and climate issues and which recognize agriculture’s contribution to solutions.
33. We support legislative efforts to study and mitigate climate change.
34. We support government or market-based climate change requirements based on sound science with farmers receiving credit for existing agricultural and forestry practices that sequester carbon such as:
  - Tree credits
  - Pasture credits
  - Hay credits
  - Local or reduced transportation credits
  - Byproduct usage credits
  - No-till planting credits
  - Cover crop credits
35. We support any government or market-based climate change program giving consideration to voluntary aggregation of multiple, separately owned farm and forest parcels for purposes of carbon sequestration credits.
36. We support reimbursing farmers for costs associated with mandated government or market-based climate change programs.
37. We support climate change policies that are size neutral and that do not push farms into getting bigger in order to comply.
38. We oppose legislation and regulations designed to address climate change that place local agricultural operations at a competitive disadvantage relative to foreign suppliers.
39. We oppose a carbon tax on energy.