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FOREWORD

Glossary of Terms

- AFBF: American Farm Bureau Federation
- AMP: Accepted Management Practices
- BMPs: Best Management Practices
- CFR: Code of federal regulation
- Current Use: Use Value Assessment
- FSA: Farm Service Agency
- NMP: Nutrient Management Plan
- NRCS: Natural Resource Conservation Service
- OFPA: Organic food production Act
- RAPs: Required Agricultural practices
- USDA: United States Department of Agriculture
- UVA: Use Value Assessment or Current Use
- UVM: University of Vermont
- VAAFM: Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets
- VANR: Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
- VDEC: Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation
- VTC: Vermont Technical College
- VTFB: Vermont Farm Bureau

Purpose of VTFB

VTFB is an independent, non-governmental, voluntary organization governed by, and representing, the families of farmers and foresters, united to improve the net income of its members and preserve Vermont’s rural quality of life. The mission of VTFB is to be the unifying voice of Vermont agriculture. (RC 2017)

VTFB core values are to be: Family oriented, inclusive, innovative, member-driven and non-partisan (RC 2017)

VTFB is a member of the American Farm Bureau Federation, (AFBF), a national organization of farmers and ranchers in all 50 states and Puerto Rico. The positions expressed in these pages represent VTFB’s views on various issues as they relate to Vermont. The positions of the national Farm Bureau organization collectively

1 are expressed through the AFBF.

2 Farm Bureau is local, county, state, national and international
3 in its scope and influence and is non-partisan, non-sectarian and
4 non-secret in character. Farm Bureau is the voice of agricultural
5 producers of all kinds, all sizes and all levels as determined by its
6 members.

7
8 **AGRICULTURE, GENERAL**

1

9
10 A strong and prosperous agricultural economy is vital to
11 Vermont's rural quality of life. We urge that the economic viability of
12 Vermont's agricultural industry be paramount as public policies are
13 formulated. In this regard, VTFB specifically supports:

- 14
15 1) Use Value Assessment of all farm and productive forestland.
16 2) Voluntary sale or transfer of development rights.
17 3) Reducing capital gains and inheritance taxes.
18 4) Increasing investment tax credits.
19 5) Cost/benefit evaluation of all environmental and land use
20 regulation.
21 6) Compensation to landowners for any reduction in land value
22 caused by law or governmental regulation.
23 7) Right to Farm and right to practice Forestry (2011)
24 8) Strengthening and diversifying value-added processing of
25 agricultural products.
26 9) Efforts to educate and inform the public on ways farmers
27 provide stewardship of the land.
28 10) The development and implementation of a long-term national
29 farm policy. (2013)

30
31 We strongly support groups, organizations and institutions,
32 which help strengthen Vermont agriculture.

33
34 VTFB supports the diversification of farming to include
35 additional activities such as agritourism and on-farm rural
36 enterprises. (2016).

37
38 VTFB supports that local USDA committees, particularly FSA
39 and NRCS, should consist of farmers who are elected by local

1 farmers. And, these farmers should maintain leadership roles in
2 boards and committees that have direct oversight of their business
3 practices. (2010)

4 VTFB encourages increased funding by the USDA in the form
5 of low interest loans and grants to be used for a variety of
6 alternative manure management practices. (2011)

7
8 VTFB seeks greater commitment from the UVM Extension to
9 engage with concerns of the working farm and forest communities
10 and welcomes dialogue about the future of the UVM Extension.
11 (2016)

12
13 VTFB supports UVM and VTC maintaining their dairy and
14 livestock programs for the purpose of hands-on, experiential
15 student learning in all phases of farming. (2011) (2016)

16
17 VTFB supports adequate funding of the UVM Extension, and
18 we offer our support to maintain its specialized ability to work with
19 the agricultural and rural communities, particularly in subject
20 areas and localities not serviced by other agencies. (2011) (2015) We
21 encourage UVM Extension to add dairy and livestock specialists.
22 (2016)

23
24 VTFB supports agricultural enterprises of any size or
25 commodity using traditional or non-traditional methods that serve
26 small or large markets. We support all agricultural production,
27 including organic, provided that the producer follows Required
28 Agricultural Practices (RAP's) or Accepted Management Practices
29 (AMP's) for forestland.

30
31 VTFB supports full funding of the Farm Agronomics Practices
32 (FAPs) program. (2010)

33
34
35 VTFB supports continued operation of Farm First to provide
36 Vermont farmers and their families with access to free and
37 confidential support to address any personal or work related issues.
38 (Chittenden 2017)

39

1 Acknowledging its “land grant” origins, we support all efforts of
2 the UVM to strengthen Vermont agriculture and urge UVM
3 leadership to be guided in key policy decisions by its agricultural
4 heritage. Further, we believe that the UVM should:

- 5 1) Make the educational needs of Vermonters its priority.
- 6 2) Expand and improve the four-year agricultural program
7 at an affordable tuition.
- 8 3) Retain the title of the agricultural school in perpetuity
9 and keep Vermont’s agricultural community as its primary
10 focus.

11
12 VTFB urges UVM to reaffirm Vermont’s agricultural heritage of
13 working forests by re-attaining their accreditation by the Society for
14 American Foresters. (2010)

15
16 We urge the Legislature to appropriate adequate funding with
17 a minimum annual stipend of \$200,000 to support county fairs and
18 field days.

19
20 We encourage active participation in Vermont’s county fairs
21 and field days by the Vermont AAFM. Furthermore, we urge that
22 sufficient resources be allocated by the Agency on an annual basis
23 to maintain a first-class Vermont Building at the Eastern States
24 Exposition (the “Big E”) to both underline the importance of
25 agriculture in Vermont and educate the public on Vermont’s
26 agriculture heritage and industry.

27
28 VTFB supports the Vermont Working Lands Enterprise Board
29 and urges the close monitoring of the Fund it oversees. 2013
30 (2015)

31
32 VTFB supports legislation to prevent unauthorized persons
33 with fraudulent and false pretenses from gaining access to
34 agricultural production facilities including employment by making
35 such activities a criminal offense. (2014) (2015) (2016)

36
37 VTFB supports industrial hemp as a cultivated crop for uses
38 such as seed, fiber and oil. (2014)

1 VTFB supports efforts to study and publicly provide a fuller
2 understanding of Agriculture and Forestry as an economic engine
3 in the state’s economy. (2014)
4
5
6

7 **AGRICULTURE AGENCY**

2

8
9 VTFB supports cooperation between the VAAFMM, UVM and
10 other institutions with laboratory facilities to assure that the
11 Vermont agricultural community has access to laboratory facilities
12 (such as diagnostic and pathology) for agricultural science issues
13 including animal health, public health, seed and feed, and fertilizer.
14 (2013)
15

16 VTFB recognizes that the VAAFMM supports the largest industry
17 in this state and requires the necessary resources to maintain its
18 leadership and regulatory oversight.
19

20 VTFB supports the role of the VAAFMM in maintaining all
21 oversight and enforcement of regulations regarding permitting,
22 environmental regulations and inspections of farms and to allow
23 time for current regulations to realize their potential. (2013)
24

25 VTFB ~~supports~~ the definition of “farming” in 10 VSA 6001 (22)
26 and this should be used to define an agricultural operation by all
27 State agencies. (2010) (RC 2017)
28

29 VTFB supports making the Secretary of VAAFMM (or his or her
30 designee) a permanent member of the UVM’s Board of Trustees.
31 (2008)
32

33 VTFB supports adequately funding the for licensing and
34 regulations of pet shops by the State Veterinarian’s office. The
35 related Licensing fees should be directed to this program (2017)
36

37 **AGRITOURISM**

3

38
39 VTFB supports tourist information signage policy that is fair to

1 all businesses. 2016

2
3 VTFB should work closely with the AAFM to develop signage
4 for state highways to direct the public to agricultural businesses
5 and destinations.

6
7 VTFB supports changes in Vermont’s sign laws to:

8 1) Provide that signs must be a minimum of 6 feet off the
9 traveled portion of the highway and not out of the right of
10 way.

11 2) Clarify the definition of “premises” to mean land owned or
12 leased by the farmer.

13 3) Allow temporary signs outside the confines of one’s own
14 property with written permission.

15
16 VTFB urges increased State support for efforts to promote
17 tourism and the sale of agricultural products. (2011)

18
19
20
21 VTFB supports the growth & development of Agricultural
22 Tourism in Vermont and encourages legislation that would allow
23 the value added agriculture, agricultural recreation, agricultural
24 education to be considered as agriculture under Act 250 and local
25 zoning. We support consistency of these rules across the state to
26 allow Agricultural Tourism to grow and prosper. (Addison 2017)

27
28
29
30 **ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES**

4

31 FB supports legislation to control the use of all-terrain vehicles
32 (ATV’s). We favor compensation to property owners for damage
33 done by ATV’s and appropriate fines for negligent operation. We
34 support ongoing educational efforts to inform the public of its
35 responsibility to respect private property and landowner rights.

36
37 VTFB urges that ATV’s should be regulated in similar manner
38 as snow machines, including a provision for policing of landowner
39 permissions by organized clubs. (2002)

1
2 **BIOTECHNOLOGY**

5

3
4 VTFB, recognizing the importance of biotechnology to the
5 future economic well being of the state, encourages funding efforts
6 to develop biotech industries. We oppose placing prohibitions or
7 undue restrictions on the development of biotechnology products
8 which have been deemed safe and effective by appropriate
9 regulatory agencies. Further, we oppose creating lists of users of
10 agricultural biotechnology, which may target users unfairly.
11

12 VTFB opposes any legislation that would restrict the uses of
13 any product, biotech or organic, that has been approved by the
14 USDA, FDA, EPA, etc. We believe that existing legal safeguards are
15 adequate to protect all farmers & consumers. (2006) (2015)
16

17 VTFB calls upon the State of Vermont and particularly the
18 AAFM to actively enforce the genetically engineered seed labeling
19 law by adopting clear rules which state that such seeds must be
20 labeled with the words “genetically engineered” or “genetically
21 modified” in a way that a consumer will know, without a doubt,
22 that the seeds contain genetically-modified traits. (2005)
23

24 VTFB supports unbiased, scientifically based evaluations
25 concerning human and animal safety and wholesomeness, as well
26 as the environmental impacts of biotechnology and the right of
27 farmers to use these products based on these evaluations.
28

29 **COMMODITIES**

6

30
31 VTFB supports continuation and improvement of the Vermont
32 state meat inspection program under the direction of the Vermont
33 AAFM. We support national legislation to allow meat inspected
34 under the Vermont program to be sold in interstate commerce. We
35 support a meat grading system to be implemented, which will
36 enable livestock producers to expand their market. We encourage
37 the VAAFM to continue to promote local and regional markets for
38 Vermont livestock raised for slaughter.
39

1 VTFB urges passage of legislation, which eases the federal
2 inspection process required for interstate shipment of meat, which
3 already passes standards.
4

5 VTFB urges the Vermont Beef Industry Council to increase
6 support of dairy beef. (2011)(RC 2017)
7

8 VTFB opposes vertical integration, when it substantially
9 reduces market competition in the beef industry. (2006) (2016)
10

11 VTFB supports the AFBF request that the Congress and
12 appropriate regulatory agencies monitor commodity markets to
13 prevent price manipulation and promote an unencumbered free
14 market for agricultural products. (2011)
15

16 We urge that all non-producer owned agricultural processors
17 and handlers be bonded at no less than 60% of any claim value for
18 which they are found liable.
19

20 Funds for disaster relief and crop failure payments should be
21 paid directly to the affected farmer and may also apply to a
22 landowner if it is determined that the land had lost functional or
23 marketable value because of the disaster. Qualification for disaster
24 relief should be extended to isolated individual events, instead of
25 requiring whole county designations. (2001)
26

27 VTFB urges the Congress to provide adequate funding for
28 school breakfast and lunch programs offering the choice of milk
29 with all perishable food products to be served at proper
30 temperatures. We support programs such as the Women, Infants
31 and Children (WIC) Program and the Special Milk Program. (2012)

32 VTFB encourages the continuation of the Vermont “Farm to
33 Family” coupon program because it is beneficial to farmers and
34 needy families.
35

36 VTFB supports the expansion of the “Farm to Family” program
37 for producer-only farmers’ markets to include eggs, meat and dairy.
38 (2007)
39

1 VTFB supports use of locally produced food in school lunch
2 programs. (2002)

3
4 **CONSUMER PROTECTION** **7**

5
6 VTFB supports including trucks with gross vehicle weights of
7 one ton or more and agricultural equipment under Vermont's
8 lemon law statute.

9
10 Out-of-state fruits, vegetables and horticultural products
11 offered for sale in Vermont should bear signs clearly stating the
12 place of origin of such produce at the point of purchase. (2001)

13
14 VTFB requests that all foods have a Country of Origin label
15 that is WTO compliant. (2013) (2015)

16
17
18 **CROP & LIVESTOCK PROTECTION & ENHANCEMENT** **8**

19
20 VTFB recommends that pesticide regulation and pesticide
21 monitoring programs remain in the control of the VAAF. (2016)

22
23 VTFB believes that in the finding of fact concerning restriction
24 of insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides or herbicides under the
25 Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), appellant should be required
26 to show actual harm rather than calculated potentials. (2016)

27
28 Congress should monitor FQPA implementation vigorously to
29 ensure compliance with legislative intent. (2016)

30
31 **DAIRY** **9**

32
33 VTFB supports dairy supply management initiatives, including
34 mandatory that will assist in creating greater price stability. We
35 support a state, national and industry-supported, long-term,
36 counter cyclical program addressing the volatility in milk pricing
37 that will provide for the viability of the dairy industry. Any
38 program should recognize the need for regional production of milk

1 for food security purposes. Further, any program should
2 recognize the variability of significant input costs, World Trade
3 Organization compliance and reflect the true value of surplus
4 milk. (2011) (2015) (2016)

5
6 VTFB believes that any dairy farmer income safety net
7 program enacted should meet or exceed the benefits provided to the
8 Northeast dairy farmers over the last Decade. (2013) (2015)

9
10 VTFB supports the innovative development of new dairy
11 products and a way to profitably market these products in a
12 national and international market. (2010)

13
14 VTFB supports working with cooperatives and other agencies
15 to retain the Federal Milk Market Order system. We oppose any
16 reclassification of reconstituted milk under the Federal Order
17 program.

18
19 VTFB supports reform to the price discovery mechanism for
20 classified pricing. (2010)

21
22 VTFB resolves to work with dairy cooperatives in supporting
23 key issues and policies being developed in the Vermont Legislature.
24 (2010)

25
26 VTFB recommends that national dairy policy include:

- 27 1) An increase in solids not fat (SNF) minimum standards in
28 fluid milk to match the California standards.
- 29 2) A promotion assessment equivalent to the domestic
30 promotion assessment levied on all imported products and
31 commodities. (2011)

32
33 VTFB supports a regional effort through legislation to ensure
34 that dairy farmers receive a fair share of the consumer's dollar for
35 fluid dairy products. (2009)

36
37 VTFB supports the decrease of the industry somatic cell count
38 in fluid milk from dairy cows to 400,000 cells/ml to be competitive
39 in the global marketplace. (2012)(Rutland 2017)

1 VTFB encourages Milk Promotion Committees to facilitate
2 placement of milk vending machines in schools adjacent to lunch
3 areas. Vermont Colleges should also be encouraged to promote
4 dairy sales through placement of vending machines throughout
5 their buildings. (2010)

6
7 VTFB believes that milk vending machines purchased with
8 milk promotion money should be filled exclusively with dairy
9 products, as defined by Vermont statute. (2006)

10
11 The federal school lunch program should be lobbied so they
12 would subsidize 10, 12 and 16 oz. containers of milk as part of the
13 school lunch program, as well as the 8-oz. cardboard container.
14 (2009)

15
16 VTFB requests that whole milk (total fat content 3.25%) be
17 offered as a choice in all schools as part of the school lunch
18 program. (2016)

19
20 VTFB supports the use of raw milk in the production of cheese
21 aged over sixty days, provided producers follow Good
22 Manufacturing Practices (GMPs). (2009) (2016)

23
24 VTFB should ask the Vermont Legislature to amend current
25 law to require all raw milk be tested commensurate with accepted
26 risk, and that the producers be inspected the same as commercial
27 farms. (2014)

28
29 VTFB supports current law on raw milk sales and is opposed
30 to the expansion of raw milk sales. (2015) (2016)

31
32 VTFB opposes any changes to the Capper-Volstead Act that
33 allows farmers to market milk collectively without violating antitrust
34 laws. (2007)

35
36 VTFB supports truth in labeling that only beverages produced
37 by mammals be labeled as "milk." (2010) (2016)

38
39

1 **DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS**

10

2
3 VTFB supports dev. Rights agreements that contain specific time
4 frames with a defined date of commencement and termination with
5 all easements and rights reverting to the original grantor or
6 successor upon expiration of the contract. (2017)
7

8 If public funds are used to purchase development rights, we
9 believe that the following principles should apply to the purchase:

10 1. Fair market value should be paid to the landowner.

11 2. All tax obligations should be fully disclosed and explained
12 prior to purchase.

13 3. Any restrictions on use of the land should be clear and
14 limited to maintain a viable working landscape and allow
15 traditional uses, as well as innovative agricultural uses, such
16 as farm stands, bed and breakfasts, recreation, etc. for profit.
17 (2003)

18 4. Agreements should not restrict any new farming methods,
19 technology or the ability to diversify or change into other types
20 of agriculture such as ag tourism. (2012)
21

22 VTFB believes that property with development rights removed
23 should be taxed at its productive agricultural or forestry value and
24 the state Division of Property Valuation and Review should publish
25 and distribute guidelines to assist local listers in equitably
26 assessing these restricted lands.
27

28 The designation of land as “prime agricultural soils” should
29 not be the sole reason for a zoning or land use review board to
30 reject a proposed development (2006(2017)
31

32 The Vermont Land Trust and similar agencies should be
33 encouraged to foster small-scale agriculture or commercial
34 greenhouse and garden operations by assisting in conservation of
35 small parcels in high-impact areas. (2006)
36

37 VTFB supports continued funding of the Vermont Housing
38 Conservation Board. We oppose lowering the initial stewardship
39 allocation and support the requirement that the easement holder

1 pays continuing stewardship costs. (2012)

2
3 **DISEASE, INSECTS, PREDATORS & PESTS**

11

4
5 VTFB supports continuous appropriations from the Vermont
6 Legislature to study, educate and train the agricultural community
7 about Johnes disease. (2010)

8
9
10 VTFB supports preventative programs for chronic infectious
11 diseases of dairy cattle, BSE (bovine spongiform encephalitis),
12 tuberculosis and brucellosis to provide vaccination and control
13 programs as necessary through a combination of private and
14 public funding, including adequate funding for the Vermont state
15 vet's office within the AAFM, and that all such measures should be
16 considered part of an overall national security initiative. (2001)

17
18 VTFB supports awareness training and preparedness planning
19 among producers and state animal health authorities for, emerging
20 and exotic diseases of concern to livestock. (2014) (Chittenden
21 2015)

22 We support a diverse and healthy wildlife population in
23 Vermont. VTFB actively supports state, regional and national
24 policies that recognize that farm animals and agricultural crops are
25 at least as important as wildlife. We urge that management policies
26 recognize the priority of protecting both public safety and the
27 economic viability of agricultural enterprises from diseases such as
28 rabies, giardia and distemper. Further, we urge that policies
29 protect agriculture from predators, which cause economic harm
30 and threaten crops and domestic animals. (2012)

31 VTFB recommends the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department
32 pay FMV for proven losses to dairy cattle, beef cattle and sheep
33 from coyote attacks. Plus, institute a \$100 bounty on coyotes
34 until the populations are controlled. (2010) (RC2015)

35
36 VTFB supports livestock and crop producers' right to shoot
37 predators and other nuisance wildlife at baited locations using
38 lighting with prior notification of wildlife officials.

1
2 VTFB opposes any law or regulations prohibiting the use of
3 steel traps, including leg hold traps, for capturing predators,
4 varmints or fur-bearing animals.
5

6 **EDUCATION**

12

7
8 VTFB asks UVM and all land grant colleges to require all
9 students to take a course offered by the College of Agriculture that
10 covers issues such as how food is produced, what is required for
11 inputs and how much land is needed to feed the world in a fair and
12 balanced way. (2011)
13

14 VTFB requests that the Governor appoint at least one active
15 farmer to the UVM Board of Trustees. (2011)
16

17 VTFB urges the VT Agency of Education to recognize the
18 importance of agricultural knowledge at the elementary, secondary
19 and post-secondary levels and provide both financial and technical
20 support for Agriculture in the Classroom program.
21

22 VTFB supports agricultural and natural resource education
23 and establishing agricultural and natural resource education
24 programs at regional technical centers and high schools. (amended
25 2008) The Vermont Department of Education shall continue to
26 fund and support the FFA agricultural advisor position. (2012)
27

28 VTFB Encourages the University of Vermont Extension to fill
29 the vacant specialist positions with agronomy, livestock, dairy &
30 Production Agriculture Specialists (Orleans 2017)
31

32 VTFB supports and encourages agriculture education in the
33 classroom and the use of local farm products in our schools. (2009)
34

35 VTFB recommends that the AFBF promote education about
36 the benefits of consuming fresh and whole foods as an increasingly
37 important part of domestic agricultural policy. (2006)
38

39 VTFB supports the full funding of the National Veterinary

1 Service Act of 2003 and the establishment and full funding of a
2 Vermont net tuition repayment program for large animal vets in
3 underserved areas. (2008)

4
5 We urge creation of an accredited four-year professional
6 development course for agriculture teachers. (2012)

7
8 VTFB calls for the establishment of a permanent clearinghouse
9 for the collection and distribution of curriculum materials and
10 educational resources on agriculture, including videos, computer
11 software, Internet sites and farm tour information to be staffed
12 collaboratively by the Vermont Department of Education and the
13 Vermont AAFM. (2012)

14
15 We support development and introduction of a comprehensive
16 curriculum for elementary and secondary schools on agriculture
17 and forestry with balanced content bases on sound science. We
18 encourage teaching students about production agriculture,
19 animals, nutrition and forestry.

20
21 VTFB supports developing an Education-Business Coalition in
22 vocational education for the purpose of addressing the needs of
23 both interests.

24
25 VTFB supports an apprenticeship program to train
26 slaughterhouse personnel by the UVM (UVM), Vermont Technical
27 College (VTC), vocational centers or any combination thereof.
28 (2012)

29
30 VTFB supports the growth of a farm apprenticeship programs
31 to be administered and funded through the AAFM in Vermont
32 institutions and organizations for the purpose of gaining on-farm
33 practical experience for those students graduating with an interest
34 in their future in the ag industry. (2007) (2013)

35
36 VTFB supports the designated “Spire of Excellence” for food
37 systems at UVM. (2013)

38
39 VTFB supports increased funding for agricultural programs at

1 VTC, including the 2 plus 2 (FARMS) program offered in
2 cooperation with the UVM. We support a seamless transition
3 between the two institutions for the 2 plus 2 program. We further
4 support continued funding for scholarships in the 2 plus 2
5 program. (2014) (2015) (2016)(2017)

6
7 VTFB supports an agriculture teaching program at VTC in
8 conjunction with a state college teaching program. (2009)

9
10 VTFB supports adequate state funding of special education.
11 (2012)

12
13 VTFB urges the U.S. Congress to fund special education at the
14 40% level promised when the Equal Educational Opportunities law
15 was passed.

16
17
18
19 VTFB supports local control of schools, voluntary
20 consolidation of schools within a geographic area and maintaining
21 and expanding school choice. (2012) (Addison 2015) (Reaffirm
22 Addison 2017)

23
24 VTFB supports repeal of Act 46 which is forcing school
25 consolidation, limiting school choice and may in fact substantially
26 weaken our entire town meeting form of government. (2015)

27
28
29 VTFB supports an education finance reform plan, calling on
30 the Governor and Legislature to repeal current education funding
31 laws and enact a new law that incorporates all or some of the
32 following specific recommendations:

- 33 a) Relies less heavily on property taxes.
- 34 b) Controls education spending without interfering with
35 local decision-making.
- 36 c) Provides our schools with the resources they need to
37 educate our children.
- 38 d) Fairly distributes resources and tax burdens throughout
39 our state.

1 e) Supports the Use Value Appraisal (UVA) program or UVA
2 for farmland.

3 f) Supports a plan to allow districts to combine to reduce
4 the number of Supervisory Districts. (2006)
5

6 VTFB supports school choice and those programs that
7 recognize and hold school systems accountable for the quality and
8 performance of education in our Vermont school systems. (2016)
9

10 VTFB recognizes the statewide Farm to Plate initiative and will
11 work to educate its' members on the goals and objectives as well as
12 participate in the working groups when possible. (2011)
13

14 VTFB opposes unfunded education mandates by government.
15 (2007)
16

17 VTFB supports all aspects of agriculture and the continued
18 operation of a dairy herd by VTC for educational purposes. (2010)
19 (2016)
20

21 **ENDANGERED SPECIES**

22 **13**

23 We urge that the federal Endangered Species Act differentiate
24 between species that are truly in danger of extinction and those
25 marginally threatened. We also recommend amendment of the
26 Vermont Threatened and Endangered Species Act to:

27 1) Require state cost sharing and compensation for species
28 preservation. (2011)

29 2) Change the method by which species are added to the
30 threatened or endangered list by making the process more
31 specific and providing automatic annual de-listing of
32 species.

33 3) Provide incentives and/or compensation to private
34 landowners where threatened or endangered species are
35 located.

36 4) Include business representatives and landowners on the
37 Endangered Species Advisory Committee.

38 5) Consider gene banking as an option for preserving
39 species. (2012)

1 VTFB opposes listing the lynx, wolf or the Indiana Bat as
2 endangered or threatened species. (2011)

3
4 VTFB opposes the reintroduction of wolves into Vermont.
5 (2010)

6 7 **ENERGY/UTILITIES, COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY 14**

8
9 VTFB should be actively involved in any future restructuring
10 of Vermont's electric utilities. VTFB supports:

- 11 1) Unrestricted customer choice of electric supplier
- 12 2) Reasonable rules to allow consolidation of electric
13 distributors
- 14 3) Amendment of Vermont commercial law to allow farmer-
15 owned organizations to serve as consolidators to facilitate
16 negotiation of least-cost rates
- 17 4) Equitable treatment of rural customers
- 18 5) That Vermont utilities profit from power transit business
- 19 6) Maintenance of Vermont-based retail distribution
20 companies

21 VTFB favors efforts to maintain or lower electric rates in
22 Vermont. (2009)

23
24 VTFB supports production of renewable electricity on farms at
25 a rate of return on investment equal to or greater than that
26 supported by the Public Service Board for other utilities. (2009)

27
28 VTFB supports more review on sites designated for commercial
29 wind & solar power. We support public participation in energy
30 project siting and ensuring transmission capacity earlier in the
31 regulatory process. Local governments, residents, and VAAF
32 should have status in the siting decisions of renewable energy.
33 (2015) (2016). (Orleans 2017)

34
35 VTFB urges support for regional and national efforts to
36 develop sources of renewable energy from agricultural production

1 and land and to include wind, solar, fiber and hydro, as a priority
2 national energy policy, as is promoted by the 25 by 25 initiative.

3
4 VTFB supports tax breaks and other incentives directed
5 towards renewable on farm energy sources such as wind, solar,
6 hydro, biodiesel, biogas, methane and methane digesters, and
7 wood chip systems, and the development of educational programs
8 that provide technical advice in these technologies. (2010)

9
10 VTFB supports the use of approved outdoor furnaces and
11 should work to ensure that any regulations developed are favorable
12 to the agriculture and forestry communities. (2012)

13
14 VTFB corn burning appliances and devices that are allowed by
15 EPA regulations. If the EPA does not have standards or tests for
16 corn, use wood pellets standards as a reference. (2017)

17
18 VTFB supports facilitating the building of energy projects
19 using woody biomass as fuel, including commercial pellet
20 manufacturing. (2013)

21 VTFB supports net metering. (2013)

22
23 VTFB supports electric utilities charging an appropriate fee to
24 the net metering customer to cover their costs associated with
25 supplying electricity to the net metering customer when the
26 customers demand for electric power exceeds the net metering
27 generation. (2013)

28
29 VTFB opposes the Federal increase in the percentage of
30 ethanol in gasoline. (2012)

31
32 VTFB resolves to urge the State of Vermont to do all they can
33 to stabilize carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere by promoting
34 alternative energy systems and efficient heating and transportation
35 methods. (2010)

36
37 VTFB supports exploration of reliable and viable alternate

1 energy sources for Vermont. (2014)

2
3 VTFB urges the Vermont Legislature do what's necessary to
4 bring broadband Internet access to all homes and businesses in
5 the State of Vermont. (2014)

6
7 VTFB supports increasing the height limits on existing cell
8 towers to reduce the need for additional towers. (2015)

9
10 **ENVIRONMENT**

15

11
12 VTFB urges Congress to clarify and affirm that agriculture is
13 not subject to the Comprehensive Environmental and Liability Act
14 (CERCLA), nor to the Environmental Planning and Community
15 Right to Know Act (EPCRA), correcting misinterpretations of these
16 acts by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). (2007)

17
18 VTFB supports a requirement that all EPA regulations,
19 rulemaking and procedures adopted regarding agriculture and
20 forestry be based on solid, peer-reviewed data and that the
21 requirements derived from both the Clean Air Act and the Clean
22 Water Act include standards-based performance goals based on
23 sound science with data subject to peer review. We also request
24 our Congressional delegation to support requiring a cost-benefit
25 analysis before implementation of all such regulation. (2010)

26
27 VTFB should promote the image of Vermont farms as
28 environmentally friendly, sustainable users of the land.

29
30 VTFB supports the development of a suitable no cost disposal
31 program for discarded tires and a recycling program for
32 agricultural plastic waste. (2013)

33
34 All regulations governing the uses of Vermont farm and
35 forestland should explicitly acknowledge that evidences of human
36 activity are a necessary, pleasing and desirable part of the natural
37 landscape.

1
2
3
4 VTFB encourages cooperation between the Department of
5 Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the Vermont AAFM (AAFM)
6 in providing resources for farmers affected by the perfluorooctanoic
7 acid (PFOA) contamination. We request the DEC and AAFM to
8 address the increased impact of contaminated water on soils, crops,
9 livestock and the farmers' livelihoods. 2016

10
11 **EQUINE**

16

12
13 VTFB supports full and equal status within agriculture for
14 Vermont's equine business owners. To achieve such status, we
15 support:

- 16 1) Equine business property being eligible as Agricultural
17 property in UVA.
- 18 2) Inclusion of the equine businesses under the agricultural
19 sales tax exemptions.
- 20 3) Maintaining an active equine committee within VTFB.
- 21 4) Trails, parking areas and camping sites for equine
22 activity being made available in Green Mountain National
23 Forest and State lands. (2013) (2015) (2016)
- 24 5) Developing an expanded definition of farm income from
25 equine businesses. (2010) (2013) (2014) (2016)

26
27 VTFB shall continue to lobby the State of Vermont Office of
28 Workers' Compensation about the unfairness of a single class code
29 (8279) for the Equine Industry in VT. It imposes a serious financial
30 burden to the industry and may even encourage some members to
31 avoid carrying this important coverage. (2015)

32
33 VTFB supports revision of the Vermont Equine statute to set
34 limitations of liability per incident. (2010)

35
36 **FINANCE**

17

37 VTFB supports permanent and dependable funding of the
38 Vermont Economic Development Authority (VEDA) as a critical
39 source of credit and capital for Vermont farmers. Further, we favor

1 regular increases in the funding to keep pace with the increasing
2 credit needs of farmers and urge VEDA to extend repayment terms
3 to make loans more affordable. (2012) (2016)
4

5 Farm Credit agencies should not be bought and sold out of the
6 control of the farmers involved. (2011) (2016)
7

8 VTFB supports efforts of the Farm Credit System to ensure
9 that adequate credit is available for agriculture. (2006) (2016)
10

11 VTFB encourages increased funding by the USDA, in the form
12 of low-interest loans and grants, to be used for alternative manure
13 management practices (i.e. anaerobic digesters). (2007) (2016)
14

15 **FOOD QUALITY AND SAFETY**

18 **18**

17 VTFB supports initiatives to improve and streamline food
18 safety to ensure that policies and procedures are in place that
19 build trust and reliability in U.S. agriculture. In addition to
20 supporting good agricultural practices (GAP) we support guidelines
21 that are tailored to the size, type and capacity of the farm. (2014)
22

23 VTFB supports the same regulatory and safety standards
24 required for domestically grown products be required for imported
25 products to protect consumer safety and prevent economic
26 advantages. (2013)
27

28 VTFB supports the VAAFMM researching installation at a Food
29 Venture Center or other supportive venue a Phyto Sanitary
30 Irradiation device [also known as cold pasteurization] in order to
31 improve the safety and marketability of Vermont produce. (Lamoille
32 2017)
33

35 **FORESTRY**

38 **19**

37 VTFB supports research under the United States Forest
38 Service [USFS] Forest Carbon Accounting Framework, defining the
39 capacity of actively managed forests and forest soils to absorb and

1 retain greenhouse gases such as CO2. This research is published
2 in the annual Forest Inventory Analysis reports and disseminated
3 through the Climate Change Advisors initiative to lawmakers,
4 media, and the public. www.fis.fs.fed.us/forestcarbon

5
6 VTFB supports USFS amending its policy regarding fire. We
7 support active timber management for the purpose of reducing
8 destructive wild fire in the Urban/Wild lands Interface, and the
9 encouragement of fire in forest domains where frequent burns are
10 an appropriate management tool. (2016)

11
12 VTFB supports continuation of traditional uses on the former
13 Champion Paper Company land and all State Forestland for
14 recreational and commercial uses. (2011)

15
16 We support exclusive use of Vermont's Acceptable Management
17 Practices (AMP's) to evaluate whether timber harvesting conforms
18 with environmental quality standards. (2006)

19
20 VTFB supports landowner-based Green marketing initiatives,
21 which promote use of timber sourced from sustainably managed
22 and privately-owned North American woodlands, such as the
23 Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and the American Tree Farm
24 Systems PEFC certification. (2010)

25
26 Farmers should not be required to obtain zoning permits or
27 environmental review before converting forested land to
28 agricultural uses. (2011)

29
30 Forestland, like all agricultural land, must be economically
31 sustainable to remain viable. In order to maintain forests as a vital
32 part of Vermont's working rural landscape, we urge that the
33 following principles apply to all Federal, state and local zoning and
34 planning policy regarding forestland:

35
36 1) The average annual harvest of forest products should
37 approximate the long-term average annual growth of those forest
38 products.

39 2) Forestland must be assessed for tax purposes at UVA.

- 1 3) All generally accepted silvicultural tools, including clear cutting
- 2 and aerial spraying, must be available to owners of forestland.
- 3 4) In order to promote development of robust value-added wood
- 4 manufacturing enterprises in rural towns, Vermont should devise
- 5 business-friendly legal, transportation, energy, communication,
- 6 economic, tax and regulatory policies. (2006)
- 7 5) Forest management plans should provide for multiple uses on
- 8 virtually all lands where feasible. (2012)

9
10 All government land acquisitions should meet the following
11 conditions:

- 12 1) The state and/or federal government obtain local (municipal)
- 13 approval before purchasing land in that community.
- 14 2) There is no net gain in the amount of land owned or controlled
- 15 by government as a result of the purchase.
- 16 3) Government land acquisition should be funded exclusively by
- 17 sale or trade of existing property.
- 18 4) Government-owned land should be valued by Listers and pay tax
- 19 to Towns in the same manner and rates as equivalent privately
- 20 owned land. (2010) The Payments In Lieu Of Taxes [PILOT] must
- 21 not be reduced by the legislature to save funds for Montpelier at the
- 22 expense of Towns. (2016)

23
24 1. VTFB supports the revisions to the U.S. Forest Service
25 Roadless rule, which would protect existing roads and allow
26 the construction of new roads for the purpose of harvesting
27 timber, improving wildlife habitat and fighting forest fires.
28 (2005) VTFB supports maintaining forest roads on public
29 lands and designation of no additional Roadless areas.
30 Regulations of such roads should be by rule of USDA Forest
31 Service, and not transferred to EPA jurisdiction. (2013)

32
33 VTFB supports sustainable timber harvest in the Green Mountain
34 National Forest. (2003)

35
36 VTFB opposes the Wild Lands Project or any analogous attempt to
37 depopulate forested land in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont.
38 (2006)

1
2 VTFB opposes the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA) or
3 any similar acts and recognizes that the private ownership of
4 property is the foundation of a prosperous economy and a free
5 society.

6
7 VTFB opposes expanded government ownership of working rural
8 lands because of the threat to the resource base of the farm and
9 forest industries, the threat to the tax base of many rural
10 communities and in some cases, the threat to the survival of rural
11 communities.

12
13 VTFB supports early successional management on all public
14 lands. (OR 2017)

15
16 VTFB continues to oppose extension of the Silvio O. Conte
17 National Wildlife Refuge, as well as any program for the US
18 government or State government to acquire private lands. (Lamoille,
19 Orange & Addison 2017)

20
21 VTFB supports the promotion and maintenance of current
22 sawmills and encourages development of new sites. (2003)

23
24 VTFB supports a coordinated national and state effort to halt the
25 spread of non-native plants, pathogens or pests destructive to forest
26 productivity, including, but not limited to, Asian Long-horned
27 Beetle (ALB), Emerald Ash Borer, Hemlock Woolly Adelgid and the
28 Garlic Mustard plant. Appropriate measures may include:

- 29 1) Ban on untreated woody materials such as blocking or pallets
30 from China and other countries with potential insect invaders;
31 2) Monitoring of populations, both visual and using pheromone
32 traps;
33 3) Removal and disposal of all infected trees or clearing of infested
34 sites with appropriate quarantines and enforcement;
35 4) Incorporation of identification and eradication information into
36 all continuing education programs conducted for farmers, foresters,
37 loggers and the public, including displays at fairs, conventions and
38 other public events. (2010)

39

1 VTFB supports the ban on importation of firewood into the State of
2 Vermont. (2014) (2016)

3
4 **GOVERNMENT - MISCELLANEOUS**

20

5
6 VTFB supports the reaffirmation of the fundamental practice
7 of political power and participation beginning with and flowing
8 from the people at the local level.

9
10 VTFB urges that public hearings affecting farmers be fully and
11 prominently warned and held in locations and at times to maximize
12 participation by farmers.

13
14 We oppose all unfunded government mandates and request
15 the Legislature to request an annual report from Vermont's
16 congressional delegation regarding the cost of new federal laws and
17 regulations. (2016)

18
19 VTFB supports legislation to prohibit transfer of funds for use
20 contrary to the designated purpose of such funds.

21
22 **GOVERNMENT - STATE**

21

23
24 VTFB opposes taking funds from the property tax abatement
25 programs for other purposes (2012)

26
27 VTFB opposes the legalization of recreational marijuana (2015)
28 (2016)

29
30 VTFB shall work closely with the Administration in the rule
31 making process if recreational marijuana is legalized. (2016)

32
33 **HEALTH**

22

34
35 VTFB supports legislative efforts to address the cost crisis in
36 health care and to make health insurance available and affordable
37 to all Vermonters. (2011)

38
39 VTFB supports these considerations to be included in any

1 restructuring of health care by the U.S. Congress:

- 2 1) Portability across state lines
- 3 2) Tort reform to decrease insurance costs to primary health
- 4 providers
- 5 3) No tax upon uninsured individuals or small businesses
- 6 4) Tax equity between employer-directed and individual
- 7 insurance premiums
- 8 5) Free choice among various levels of insurance coverage
- 9 6) Not to discriminate against pre-existing conditions (2009)

10
11 VTFB supports repeal of the Federal Affordable Care Act of
12 2010, to permit implementation of health care measures
13 embodying the principles outlined above. (2010)

14
15 VTFB supports using net income to determine eligibility and
16 premiums if income sensitivity is used as an indicator in any new
17 health insurance initiative (2014) (2015) (2016).

18
19 VTFB supports legislative efforts to provide a healthcare
20 program that emphasizes free market competition and consumer
21 freedom of choice. (2014) (2015) (2016)(Orleans reaffirm 2017)

22
23 VTFB supports maintaining our rural hospitals.

24
25 VTFB believes the Legislature and Executive Branch should
26 re-examine, revise and repeal laws and regulations that mandate
27 joint and severable liability for excessive losses by health insurers,
28 and laws and regulations that prohibit or discourage health
29 insurers from creating insurance products that provide consumers
30 and businesses greater freedom of choice with greater personal
31 responsibility, by charging premiums that allow discounts for age,
32 occupation, healthy behavior and coverage.

33
34 We urge further study of the role of animal fats and
35 hydrogenated vegetable oils in human health. The VTFB requests
36 that research regarding the positive relationship between intake of
37 dairy products and bone density measurements throughout the
38 human life span be done before any change in the recommended
39 intake of dairy products, particularly of milk as a beverage of choice,

1 during periods of growth. (2012)

2
3 VTFB supports “Fit and Healthy Kids,” an interdepartmental
4 cooperation between the Vermont Department of Health and the
5 Department of Education, with the goal of improving child nutrition
6 by promoting a healthy diet of fresh food from local farms. (2010)

7 VTFB opposes any new payroll taxes to fund any health
8 insurance initiatives. Any health care reform should merge health
9 insurance with workers’ compensation. (2014) (2015)

10
11
12 **LABOR**

23

13
14 VTFB supports the Worker Compensation report, prepared in
15 2009 by a private sector task force of employers, manufacturers,
16 small businesses and self-employed persons subject to worker
17 compensation. We ask that the Legislature adapt the changes,
18 which would improve delivery of service to injured employees,
19 reduce the administrative costs imposed on employers, simplify the
20 claims process and stabilize the program. We also ask that benefits
21 be the same as bordering states to give us a level playing field.
22 (2010)

23
24 VTFB support efforts by VT Dept. of Forests and Parks to find
25 ways to reduce the premiums for Workers Compensation
26 Insurance, and direct Farm Bureau to assist in the effort to
27 remodel Vermont’s badly damaged Worker’s Compensation laws to
28 permit employer cooperatives to create safety and loss prevention
29 networks. (Lamoille 2017)

30
31 VTFB supports workers’ compensation reform initiatives that
32 address the need for accessible and affordable workers’
33 compensation insurance in the State of Vermont.
34 (2016) .(Chittenden 2017)

35
36
37 VTFB ~~supports~~ clarifying and making uniform across all State
38 of Vermont agencies how contract and independent workers are

1 classified for Workers' Compensation, Unemployment Insurance
2 and other employment mandates. Lamoille, Addison, Washington,
3 2016.

4
5 VTFB supports immigration reform that would allow for the
6 use of migrant workers year round on dairy farms, for a minimum
7 of 3 years and asks that the US Labor Secretary revisit the
8 unfavorable ruling that did not treat dairy farms the same as sheep
9 farms. (2012).

10
11
12 VTFB supports that the issue of benefits provided by the
13 Jamaican Central Labor Organization should not risk the future of
14 the H2A program and its successful implementation in Vermont
15 and New England. VTFB further asks that the US Department of
16 Homeland Security continue to permit employer deductions for
17 payments to JCLO. (2012)

18
19 VTFB asks that the Vermont Legislature pass a resolution to
20 urge the US Department of Homeland Security and the US
21 Department of Labor to coordinate efforts that will ensure the
22 reliable and timely issuance of H2A visas for Jamaican and other
23 migrant workers and the predictable supply of high quality labor
24 for Vermont producers. (2012)

25
26 VTFB supports legislation to exempt payment of
27 unemployment benefits to seasonal employees, except during the
28 seasonal period of employment. Further, we oppose any increase in
29 unemployment benefits.

30
31 VTFB opposes inconsistent and heavy-handed enforcement by
32 the INS of cases involving undocumented farm workers. We urge
33 Congress to simplify visa procedures for farm workers, to recognize
34 the human rights of persons who enter this country seeking work
35 and to lessen the penalties against employers who hire foreign
36 workers who possess valid documents and to include a reasonable
37 path to citizenship for those interested laborers. (2008)

38
39 VTFB resolves that Vermont farm employers should not be

1 responsible for the no-match IDs of employees or subject to any
2 penalties as a result. (2007)

3
4 VTFB supports aggressive action to improve the availability of
5 foreign guest workers for dairy and other year-round agricultural
6 operations (2012)

7
8 VTFB strongly encourages a coordinated federal policy that
9 supports the H2A program for seasonal guest workers for orchard,
10 vegetable, fruit and other agricultural operations. (2011)

11
12 VTFB asks the U.S. Department of Labor to clarify child labor
13 laws so that children of parents who are part owners of a farm can
14 work on that farm. (2011)

15
16 **LEGAL/LIABILITY**

24

17
18 VTFB urges the Legislature to minimize the legal tort liability
19 of agricultural businesses as it adds undue costs and is contrary to
20 the public interest.

21
22 VTFB supports legislation to make agritourism providers
23 immune from civil liability for harm sustained by a participant if
24 the harm is the result of an inherent risk in the activity and not
25 gross negligence, intentional misconduct, or recklessness of the
26 provider. (2016)(Chittenden 2017)

27
28 VTFB supports protecting private property owners from
29 lawsuits by persons who enter their property with or without
30 permission.

31
32 VTFB urges the Legislature to replace the “willful and wanton
33 misconduct” standard with an “intentional infliction of harm”
34 standard in the so-called Landowner Liability statute.

35
36 Reforms to Landowner Liability Laws should include
37 provisions that protect landowners from injury that is the result of
38 activities associated with the usual and customary practice of
39 farming or forestry. And that the following language be included to

1 further protect private property rights: “The fact that a landowner
2 has permitted use, either implied (by not posting the land) or
3 expressed for recreation purposes, does not establish a claim or
4 right, nor can it be used to establish such a claim by the users.
5 The fact that a landowner has not posted the land, thereby
6 permitting access, shall not limit or preclude the landowner from
7 excluding or limiting trails or uses at any time in the future.”
8

9 VTFB supports a “loser pays” or English Rule statute when a
10 lawsuit is ruled to be “frivolous” by the court.
11

12 VTFB believes that the liability of property owners for injury by
13 livestock or guardian animals be strictly limited to cases of gross
14 and willful negligence.
15

16 The liability of landowners for injuries suffered by the public
17 should be strictly limited except for “intentional infliction of harm,”
18 nor should a landowner be liable for any injury suffered upon a
19 structure erected to comply with a directive from a state or federal
20 agency.
21

22 We support the right of self-defense for property and person.
23 We also support victims of crime being afforded the same rights as
24 criminals and urge amendments to laws and regulations affirming
25 these rights.
26

27 VTFB supports the lawful ownership and use of sporting
28 firearms by private individuals as provided in the Vermont and
29 United States Constitutions.
30

31 **LIVESTOCK**

25

32 VTFB supports the promotion of good animal care practices.
33
34

35 VTFB supports a code of ethics for livestock shows, and
36 encourages the enforcement by the show superintendent. (2005)
37

38 VTFB believes that any mandatory uniform national livestock
39 ID program should be supported by federal funds. (2005)

1
2 VTFB supports premise registration and other farm-friendly
3 measures that seek to reduce the risk of diseases and other
4 biohazard outbreaks and that in no way burdens or discourages
5 agriculture in the State of Vermont. (2006)
6

7
8 VTFB supports legislation allowing trained technicians, with a
9 veterinarian's approval, to implant embryos in farm animals.
10 (2007)
11

12 VTFB requests that the Vermont livestock inspection division
13 create a written, consistent protocol for portable slaughterhouse
14 businesses that would allow these businesses to operate on farms
15 and produce meat that is saleable within the state. (2003)
16

17 VTFB urges the Vermont Livestock Care Standards Advisory
18 Council to review proposed animal welfare legislation and make
19 recommendations to the Legislature based on the Councils review.
20 (2013)
21

22 **MAPLE**

26

23
24 VTFB supports full enforcement of existing Vermont maple
25 statutes by the office of Attorney General (2014) and the VAAF. (2016)
26
27

28 We believe that the Vermont maple industry is adequately
29 regulated to insure the highest standards of quality and protect the
30 public health.
31

32 Acknowledging the critical importance of Vermont's maple
33 industry to tourism and our economy, VTFB supports adequate
34 public funding for maple industry research, including the Proctor
35 Maple Research Laboratory.
36

37 VTFB supports the ongoing development of criteria for the use
38 of public lands in Vermont for maple sap harvesting and urges
39 state agencies to cooperate with the Vermont Maple Industry

1 Council in their development.
2

3 Be it resolved that the VT Farm Bureau join the VT Sugar
4 Makers' Association in requesting that the FDA take enforcement
5 actions to stop the misbranding of products that do not include
6 real maple, either by removing the maple branding from the
7 packaging, or by adding maple syrup - a substance derived from
8 the heat treatment of sap from the maple tree (as defined in 21
9 CFR § 168.140(a)).(Washington 2017)

10
11 **ORGANIC**

27

12
13 VTFB recognizes the advancement of organic agriculture in the
14 state and urges the Vermont State Legislature to support the
15 VAAFM, UVM and VTC in research and development of organic
16 production techniques. (2005)

17
18 VTFB supports keeping organic standards strictly organic and
19 only allow use of approved products to retain a certified organic
20 label. (2013)

21
22 VTFB supports imported organic labeling be subject to the
23 same standards as U.S. organic labeling. (2013)

24 VTFB supports the Organic Materials Review Institute list of
25 approved materials to be the same for the USDA's approved list.
26 (2013)

27
28 VTFB reaffirms the OFPA commitment to soil as the basis for
29 organic certification by the USDA. We request the National Organic
30 Program (NOP) to follow the law and not certify hydroponic as
31 organic without a change in the law. (2016)

32
33
34
35 **PLANNING**

28

36
37 VTFB opposes government acquisition of agricultural lands for
38 uses such as landfills, septic systems and roads as being contrary
39 to the priority of preserving our rural landscape. We support the

1 adoption of a standard definition of “prime agricultural soils”
2 incorporating an analysis of such considerations as critical mass,
3 proximity to adjacent farms, economic viability and farm services.
4

5 We support local, rather than state, decision-making regarding
6 recreation paths, scenic corridors and other land use planning
7 issues.
8

9 VTFB urges its members to serve on local and regional
10 planning and zoning commissions to work to inform and educate
11 these boards on issues of importance to agriculture. We support a
12 simple appeals process at all levels.
13

14 VTFB supports continued exemption from local zoning and Act
15 250 for agricultural improvements. (2006)
16

17 VTFB believes that reducing sprawl should begin with reform
18 of the following existing laws and regulations:

- 19 1) Vermont land gains tax
- 20 2) On-site septic regulations
- 21 3) Property taxes on farmland.
22

23 **PROPERTY OWNERS’ RIGHTS**

29 **29**

24
25 VTFB supports protection of private property owners’ rights
26 embodied in the Constitutions of the United States and the State of
27 Vermont.
28

29 VTFB favors the right of landowners to remove gravel from
30 streams to keep them from flooding and eroding and that this
31 channel management tool is considered as one option when a
32 problem is being assessed. (2010)
33

34 VTFB supports working with the Agency of Transportation and
35 Agency of Natural Resources on a systematic plan to identify where
36 the river channels are located and maintain those channels. (2011)
37

38 Restrictions on the ownership or use of private property by
39 government should be made only in cases of compelling public

1 interest.

2
3 VTFB supports the right of property owners to utilize their
4 property including providing private hunting opportunities,
5 including fenced hunting areas.

6
7 VTFB supports legislation at the federal, state and local levels
8 that would require government agencies to prepare private property
9 impact statements for any new laws or regulations that impair the
10 use, value or other ownership rights of private property. (2016)

11
12 Any rule-making committee, governmental agency or
13 legislative body of federal, state and local authority which enforces
14 rules and regulations which reduces the value of private property
15 shall reimburse the property owner for lost value and the
16 municipality for lost tax revenue. Such decrease in values shall be
17 determined by the local board of civil authority through the tax
18 appeal process and the entity responsible for the loss shall pay the
19 cost.

20
21 VTFB opposes the use of government condemnation powers to
22 seize private property for recreation trails.

23
24 VTFB believes that the right of individual privacy is
25 guaranteed by Article 11 of the Vermont Constitution. Further, we
26 assert that certain decisions of the Vermont Supreme Court are not
27 constitutional and, therefore, we urge that legislation be passed to:

28 1) Insure that private driveways are not considered part of
29 public highways.

30 2) Provide that law enforcement must obtain a court-
31 authorized warrant before undertaking surveillance of any
32 kind of private property whether or not the property is
33 posted or enclosed.

34
35 Ownership of abandoned rights of way should revert to
36 abutting landowners. When a new use is proposed in such rights of
37 way, then a new right of way agreement shall be negotiated. When
38 abandoned rights of way are acquired by government after
39 compensation to the abutting landowners, we urge that all

1 maintenance, including fences, be adequately maintained by
2 government. (2006)

3
4 We support a law to require agencies of government to notify
5 owners of private property by certified mail 30 days before any
6 consideration of any proposed restriction, inclusion of the land in a
7 government inventory, map or plan, or any action that affects the
8 use or value of the property. We urge that all agencies of
9 government respect the right of private property owners to review
10 any such proposals and their right to appeal any decision to a
11 higher authority or the courts, and that violators of the law receive
12 prompt investigation and adjudication.

13
14 VTFB supports legislation to prohibit wellhead protection
15 areas being created on anyone's property without their written
16 permission. (2013)

17
18 VTFB believes there should be appropriate and immediate
19 enforcement of trespassing laws with penalties to enable and
20 compel law enforcement authorities to assist landowners in
21 protecting property from unwanted trespassers. (2007)

22
23 We believe that private property is private and that
24 governmental officials and the public must obtain permission from
25 property owners before entering private property for any purpose.

26 We support the right of private property owners to post their
27 land.

28
29 VTFB supports the USDA view that Nutrient Management
30 Plans are proprietary information not to be released to the public.
31 (Addison 2017)

32
33 VTFB supports the efforts of Vermont Traditions Coalition to
34 make sure that management on public lands is supportive of
35 individual property rights, and to strengthen a coalition of farming,
36 forestry, hunting and outdoor sporting interests. (2003)

37
38 The Vermont Legislature should adopt a law, as urged by the
39 U.S. Supreme Court in *Kelo v. New London*, restricting the use of

1 powers of eminent domain to cases of public necessity. Property
2 taken by eminent domain should be the smallest quantity
3 necessary for the stated use, and should be devoted entirely to
4 public use. Government should never seize property for the
5 purpose of transferring to a second private party. (2010)

6
7 **RECREATION**

30

8
9 VTFB believes that farm and forestlands are first and foremost
10 for farm and forest production. We acknowledge, however, that
11 many private property owners voluntarily allow public access to
12 their land for recreation of all kinds and for public rights of way
13 and that in return it is fair and reasonable that the following
14 conditions apply to such access:

- 15 1) Property owner permission must be obtained.
- 16 2) Information or data gathered with the voluntary
17 participation of the private property owner belongs first to
18 the property owner who gave permission for any other
19 proposed uses of the data.
- 20 3) The recreational use must be compatible with generally
21 accepted farm and forest practices.
- 22 4) Signage and informational materials should be made
23 available to recreational users to encourage respect for
24 private property.
- 25 5) Costs of public recreation should be borne by the public.
- 26 6) Private support to help maintain and improve lands
27 allowing public access should be encouraged.

28
29 VTFB supports legislation and regulation
30 that would preserve and facilitate the continued use of public lands
31 including wilderness areas and other specifically designated areas
32 for horse trails, pack and saddle stock animals and other
33 recreational pursuits. (2013)

34
35 **REGULATION**

31

36
37 VTFB supports oversight of agriculture by the VAAFPM on all
38 issues affecting agriculture. Further, we support exempting
39 agriculture from Act 250 as being fundamentally in the public

1 interest.

2

3 VTFB supports a change in law with respect to Act 250. For
4 land in which development is proposed to occur that is devoted to
5 agriculture or forest management, any restrictions or conditions
6 placed on the development in order to obtain an Act 250 permit
7 shall apply only to the portion of the property involved in the
8 development, and forestry and agricultural uses can continue
9 without restrictions or encumbrances. (2005)

10

11 VTFB encourages the VAAFMM be flexible when weather conditions
12 prevent farmers from following the Required Agricultural Practices
13 in a timely manner. (Orleans 2017)

14

15 VTFB believes that manure pits should not be assumed to be
16 leaking unless that assumption is verified by testing. (2011)

17

18 VTFB supports the use of satellite manure storage (2015).
19 (2016)

20

21 VTFB believes that natural emissions from agriculture should
22 not be regulated under national air quality standards. (2005)

23

24 VTFB strongly supports 24 VSA; SEC 4413 entitled
25 "Limitations on Municipal Bylaws." (2006)

26

27 VTFB favors the right of landowners to have the right to cut
28 their trees in the road right of way without having to get a permit
29 from the town.

30

31 VTFB supports legislative changes creating a statute of
32 limitations of seven (7) years for state subdivision permit violations
33 where such action was not willful and where there is no threat to
34 the public health and safety.

35

36 VTFB recommends that farm enterprises be exempt from the
37 Labor and Industry Public Building permitting requirements if:

38

39 1) Those enterprises are involved primarily in production,
preparation or packaging farm products harvested on the

1 premises.

2 2) There is no substantial public access to the farm
3 buildings other than by farm workers.

4
5 VTFB supports exempting existing gravel pits from Act 250
6 review.

7
8 VTFB favors legislation to streamline the present
9 environmental permitting process by providing more information to
10 permit applicants, and avoiding duplication, unnecessary delays
11 and frivolous appeals.

12
13 VTFB supports expedited approval for communications
14 facilities, including cell towers, which may be based in or upon
15 existing farm structures, or land. (2001)

16
17 VTFB supports maintaining the right of farmers to contract for
18 cell towers on conserved land without penalty. (2002)

19
20 VTFB supports continuing efforts by the AAFM working with
21 the Department of Environmental Conservation to streamline the
22 burdensome permitting process for slaughterhouses in Vermont.

23
24 We support exempting farms with fewer than 10 employees
25 from OSHA regulations.

26
27 VTFB supports reciprocity for pesticide applicators, if they are
28 certified in a bordering state.

29
30 VTFB supports reciprocity of a well drilling license between
31 Vermont and neighboring states.

32
33
34
35 VFB believes that criterion 9(b) primary ag soils should be
36 eliminated from the Act 250 environmental development law.

37
38 VTFB urges legislators to consider the competitiveness of
39 primary producers by reducing the costs of doing business in

1 Vermont. Insurance, regulatory fees, and taxes should be analyzed
2 for their impact on businesses which maintain open and
3 undeveloped land in the State of Vermont. (2016) (Chittenden
4 2017)

5
6 VTFB supports keeping responsibility for animal cruelty
7 reporting, investigations, and enforcement, on working farms, in the
8 VAAF, who has educated knowledge of accepted animal practices.
9 (2014) (2016)

10
11 VTFB supports the inclusion of farm stands as agricultural
12 buildings, as defined by the state regardless of the amount of sales
13 or whether the land used for production is contiguous to the stand,
14 as long as the stand sells farm products produced by the
15 farmer/farmers. (2015)

16 **RIGHT TO FARM AND PRACTICE FORESTRY**

17 **32**

18
19 VTFB supports:

20 1) The right of Vermont private property owners to produce
21 and market agricultural products.

22 2) A farmer's right to choose agricultural methods,
23 including modern technologies, providing that Required
24 Agricultural Practices (RAP's) and Accepted Management
25 Practices (AMP's) are practiced. (2011)

26 3) Actions to ensure that farmers be protected from undue
27 liability and nuisance suits when carrying out such
28 practices.

29 4) Informing all purchasers of Vermont property of a private
30 property owner's fundamental "right to farm" within
31 "Required Agricultural Practices."

32 5) The VAAF establishing a variance process in regards to
33 RAPs regulations. (2013)

34
35 VTFB supports a right to practice forestry that will relieve
36 landowners from lawsuits for injury from normal forest operations.
37 (2016)

38
39 VTFB should continue efforts to strengthen the state's right to

1 farm law. (2005)(2015)

2
3 VTFB supports only the Secretary of Agriculture, not towns or
4 other municipalities setting the standards for nuisance issues of
5 noise, odor, traffic, flies and other pests on all agricultural
6 operations. (2008)(2015)

7
8 VTFB supports the introduction of legislation that would
9 require that homebuyers who move next to farms be informed that
10 agriculture can be noisy, odiferous, dusty – and that farmers have
11 a right to farm and require developers and real estate agents to
12 inform potential buyers about Vermont’s right to farm whenever
13 property changes hands. (2008)

14
15 VTFB supports continuation of the Large and Medium Farm
16 Operation laws with an appropriate level of review by the Vermont
17 AAFM of large livestock operations and the impacts these have on
18 the environment and the community. We will do whatever is
19 necessary to keep all agriculture oversight within the Vermont
20 AAFM. (2011)

21
22 VTFB resolves that commercial farms encroached on by
23 suburban areas should not be subject to regulation under
24 nuisance or noise laws, and that all existing regulatory exemptions
25 for on-going farm operations should be maintained.

26
27 VTFB will continue to have an active role in protecting the
28 Right To Farm; specifically, that all water quality laws be based on
29 solid science, not by politically friendly initiatives. (2014)

30
31 VTFB supports legislation to ~~protect~~ farm animal owners from
32 being held criminally liable for any accident caused by their
33 roaming animals that have escaped confinement. (2016)(Reaffirm
34 Rutland 2017)

35
36 VTFB will ask the legislature to strengthen Vermont’s Right to
37 Farm Law to protect farmers and farmland, whose use has been

1 modified, yet still stays within Vermont’s definition of farming.
2 (2016)

3

4 **SEAL OF QUALITY** **33**

5

6 VTFB supports re-institution within the VAAFMM of a Seal of
7 Quality program for the purpose of promoting Vermont-grown or
8 Vermont-processed foods and food products. Farmers and local
9 food processors should be included in the rule-making and
10 administrative oversight committees under this program. (2013)
11 (2016)

12

13 **SOLID WASTE/RESIDUALS** **34**

14

15 VTFB supports common sense approaches to Vermont’s solid
16 waste problems that come from locally developed solutions,
17 including marketing of recycled materials and efficient handling of
18 waste collection and transportation. Especially helpful would be
19 simple and clear guidelines for achieving effective waste disposal.
20 We especially support:

21

- 22 1) Development of effective recycling for farm-generated
23 residuals, such as plastics;
- 24 2) Allowing farm-generated residuals that are composted on
25 the farm to be done without permits under Required
26 Agricultural Practices;
- 27 3) Permitting of composting with guidelines for accepting
28 compostable waste from off a particular farm;
- 29 4) Encouragement of businesses assisting farms in disposal
30 of farm residuals. (2013)

31

32 VTFB requests the VAAFMM return to the position that
33 composting of off-farm food scraps on the farm is a Required
34 Agricultural Practice, as long as the compost is principally used on
35 the farm. (2013)

36

37 **TAXATION - MISCELLANEOUS** **35**

38

39 VTFB favors repeal of inheritance taxes, as they are an unfair
second tax on assets, which works against future generations

1 continuing family farm operations. Absent outright repeal, we
2 support increasing the federal exemption. (2012)

3
4 Estate taxes on agricultural and forestland should be based on
5 UVA, rather than on fair market value.

6
7 VTFB supports exempting farms from estate taxes upon death
8 of the owner, as long as the ownership stays within the family.
9 (2011)

10 VTFB supports simplification of the federal tax code. (2011)

11
12 The gift tax exemption should be raised to \$20,000 per person,
13 per year.

14
15 VTFB strongly supports continuation of the retail sales tax
16 exemption for agricultural items, and we oppose local or state taxes
17 on farm machinery used for custom work. (2016)

18
19 VTFB requests the legislature clarify exempt purchases for
20 agricultural uses and that any past purchases be grandfathered in,
21 except in the most egregious of cases. (2014)

22
23 VTFB supports the drafting of legislation that would allow
24 motorized vehicles registered as agricultural vehicles to be exempt
25 from Vermont sales tax. (2005)

26 VTFB opposes the addition of a sales tax to gasoline. (2011)

27
28 VTFB believes that the State of Vermont should eliminate the
29 state capital gains tax on the first \$10,000 on long-term
30 investment.

31
32 VTFB opposes the minimum entity tax on partnerships.

33
34 VTFB believes that college expenses should be deductible
35 expenses on individual tax returns.

36
37 VTFB opposes decoupling the state income tax from the
38 federal income tax.

39

1 VTFB supports a sales tax exemption for building materials
2 used for agricultural construction and/or renovations. (2012)
3 (2013)
4

5 VTFB opposes a federal value-added tax. (2009)
6

7 VTFB supports the rebate of state tax paid on fuel used in
8 vehicles registered with an agricultural plate. (2009)

9 VTFB supports the repeal of the requirement that small
10 businesses issue a 1099 to all vendors and service providers supply
11 more than \$600 of business during a calendar year. (2012)
12

13 VTFB opposes any proposal for a freestanding carbon tax. A
14 tax based on the carbon content of fuel might be entertained to the
15 extent that it replaces all other taxes on fuels, and the proceeds are
16 dedicated to transportation infrastructure in a similar fashion to
17 existing fuel taxes. (2016).(orange 2017)
18

19 **TAXATION – PROPERTY**

36

20
21 VTFB supports elimination of the Vermont land gains tax from
22 land sold for agricultural use. (2005)
23

24 VTFB supports UVA for all land growing farm and forest
25 products. This should be Vermont Tax policy, not a program.
26 (2011) (2015) (2016)
27

28 VTFB believes that farm and forestland should not carry the
29 burden of funding education and that residential property should
30 share equally in supporting education.
31

32 VTFB proposes that agricultural structures, including
33 qualified equine structures, be exempt from the property
34 tax.(Addison 2017)
35

36 VTFB opposes capital gains tax policy that gives a competitive
37 advantage to Land Trusts and Environmental Groups in the
38 purchase of rural land and other property. (2003)
39

1 VTFB supports the Vermont UVA Program and supports the
2 change to have it (Use Value Assessment) become permanent
3 policy that reflects the goal of keeping those who work the land, on
4 the land. (2009, 2014)
5

6 Whereas the state's UVA Program is vitally important to the
7 agricultural producers in this state; VTFB strongly supports
8 Vermont UVA Value Appraisal system and encourages efforts that
9 will improve the integrity and public perceptions about this vitally
10 important system of tax equity. And be it further resolved to
11 encourage better understanding of the vital role that agriculture
12 plays in the state's economy and the role that programs such as
13 UVA play in agriculture's sustainability. (2014)
14

15 VTFB continues to urge the legislature to move the state to a
16 system that utilizes UVA valuation as basic, fair and equal tax
17 assessment policy for all Vermont properties, thereby removing the
18 necessity for any tax liability adjustment program. Ag and
19 Forestland valuation currently using the income approach
20 continue to be set by the UVA Advisory Board. (2015) (Addison
21 2017)
22

23 VTFB opposes any substantial adjustments, which would have
24 a detrimental effect on participants in the UVA program. Lamoille
25 2017)
26

27 VTFB opposes connecting water quality initiative penalties
28 with the voluntary, contractual UVA program. (2015)
29 (2016)(Reaffirm Addison, Orleans 2017)
30

31 UVA land should be able to be posted like any other. (2015)
32

33 VTFB supports defining equine farm income to include
34 Vermont diverse equine activities such as boarding horses,
35 therapeutic riding, and lessons. (2016)
36

1 VTFB supports an ag-use appraisal system for small-scale ag.
2 (2007)

3
4 VTFB supports permanent continuation of UVA, at values
5 established by the Current Use Advisory Board.

6
7 If the present program is changed in any way, we support
8 participants being allowed to exit with no penalty and reducing or
9 removing the penalty on land removed from UVA. We oppose
10 restrictions such as public access without owner permission
11 including the posting of property and urge that:

- 12
13 1) “Potential” and “prospective” be deleted from the
14 definition of appraisal value.
- 15 2) Property assessments should reflect encumbrances and
16 restrictions imposed by law or regulation including
17 easements, Accepted Management Practices, Required
18 Agricultural Practices, EPA regulations and zoning/town
19 plans.
- 20 3) Farm and forestland should be assessed at its ability to
21 produce food and fiber.
- 22 4) Elimination of education taxes on working farm and
23 forest lands. (2002)
- 24 5) Participants in UVA not be disqualified if their lands are
25 operated for the purposes of fee hunting and fishing. (2003)

26
27 VTFB supports the concept that land fully conserved by grants
28 of conservation easements should be valued on the Grand List at
29 use value and not included in the UVA Program. (2010)

30
31 VTFB supports the lien placed against the deed of a UVA
32 Program participant to be considered under law as a binding
33 contract. (2011) (2016)

34
35 VTFB supports that land considered to be developed and
36 withdrawn from the UVA Program by reason of a gift to a relative or
37 employee, the Land Use Change Tax (LUCT) shall consist only of the
38 landowner refunding a five-year benefit on the affected deed. (2010)

1 VTFB supports existing VTFB policy that excluded land (from
2 the UVA program) should not be appraised as a free-standing parcel
3 in violation of honest appraisal. (2016)
4

5 VTFB supports allowing a landowner in the UVA Program to
6 relocate an undeveloped, withdrawn site of two acres or less, once
7 within an enrolled parcel, without incurring the Land Use Change
8 Tax, provided there is no reduction in the area of enrolled land.
9 (2011)
10

11 VTFB supports an “easy out” (all out) in any UVA legislation
12 that recognizes that the program is a contract between the State of
13 Vermont and the landowner, and that changes should never be
14 made unilaterally without the opportunity for parties to withdraw
15 without penalty. (2011)
16

17 VTFB supports the State of Vermont and its Legislature
18 honoring all contracts in regards to UVA and allowing those who
19 wish to remove enrolled parcels to do so without penalties after the
20 finalization of the new RAPs. (2016)
21

22 VTFB supports the State setting the penalty for land
23 withdrawal from the UVA Program, not the individual Town Listers.
24 (2011)
25

26 VTFB supports establishment of an appeal process within the
27 State Department of Forests and Parks in relation to the UVA
28 Program to allow an appeal of an adverse inspection report before
29 disenrollment from the program. (2012) (2013)
30

31 **TOURIST INFORMATION**

37

32
33 VTFB supports tourist information signage policy that is fair to
34 all businesses. 2016
35

36 VTFB should work closely with the AAFM to develop signage
37 for state highways to direct the public to agricultural businesses
38 and destinations.
39

1 VTFB supports changes in Vermont’s sign laws to:

2 1) Provide that signs must be a minimum of 6 feet off the
3 traveled portion of the highway and not out of the right of
4 way.

5 2) Clarify the definition of “premises” to mean land owned or
6 leased by the farmer.

7 3) Allow temporary signs outside the confines of one’s own
8 property with written permission.

9
10 VTFB urges increased State support for efforts to promote
11 tourism and the sale of agricultural products. (2011)

12
13
14 VTFB supports the growth & development of Agricultural
15 Tourism in Vermont and encourages legislation that would allow
16 the value added agriculture, agricultural recreation, agricultural
17 education to be considered as agriculture under Act 250 and local
18 zoning. We support consistency of these rules across the state to
19 allow Agricultural Tourism to grow and prosper. (Addison 2017)

20
21 **TRANSPORTATION**

38

22
23 VTFB asks the appropriate authorities to develop agricultural
24 highway signage that warns motorists that they are in a farming
25 area and to be on the alert for agricultural activities.(2016)

26
27 VTFB supports sufficient resources be allocated to maintain a
28 strong transportation infrastructure that will also support the
29 movement of agricultural products in our region. (2007)

30
31 VTFB supports a waiver from interstate weight limits for
32 trucks with agricultural or forestry products. (2009)

33
34 VTFB supports authorizing properly configured trucks hauling
35 agricultural or forestry materials to operate at weights up to
36 97,000 pounds on any interstate highway. We urge the Vermont
37 Congressional Delegation to make permanent the temporary waiver
38 of lower weight limits granted to Vermont for calendar 2010. (2010)

1 VTFB supports a thorough revision of DOT rules affecting
2 truck weights, axle configurations, safety improvements in truck
3 design, and other technical issues, especially to make possible easy
4 interstate and international commerce. (Lamoille 2015)

5
6 VTFB supports harmonizing Vermont truck weight laws with
7 those of neighboring states and provinces.(Lamoille 2017)

8
9 VTFB supports making state engineers available to evaluate
10 wooden deck bridges on a case-by-case basis if someone appeals
11 the weight limits and safety. (Lamoille 2017)

12
13 VTFB would like to impress upon the state Department of
14 Transportation that Vermont farmers and other business using our
15 rail system are at an economic disadvantage to other businesses in
16 neighboring states because Vermont cannot handle rail cars
17 weighing 286,000lb which is considered a national guide thus
18 considerably increasing freight rates to Vermonters (Bennington
19 2015)

20
21 VTFB supports that the state statutes provide the right to safe
22 access for all agricultural practices and the right to public access
23 to sell agricultural products (including, but not limited to, dairy
24 products, agronomic, maple syrup, horticulture and forestry)
25 across railroad crossings. (2009) (2016) .(Reaffirm Chittenden
26 2017)

27
28 VTFB supports all farming activities involving a railroad
29 crossing shall be grandfathered as of 1/1/2009. (2008) (2016)
30 (Chittenden 2017)

31
32 VTFB supports legislation that:

33 1)Ensures that the State identifies and inspects safety at
34 all farm crossings, including the storage of hazardous
35 materials.

36 2)Prohibits the storage of freight cars and tankers that

1 impairs the visibility at farm crossings.

2 3) Ensures timely information for farmers about train
3 schedules at farm crossings.

4 4) Supports farmer education on farm crossing safety.

5 5) Requires the State to review insurance policies held by
6 railway companies and to revise the lease requirements
7 regarding liability coverage at farm crossings. (Chittenden
8 2017)

9
10
11 VTFB supports the unrestricted right of vehicles involved in
12 natural resource industries to travel Vermont roads and highways
13 consistent with the public health and safety. Specialized equipment
14 used to apply materials to crops or to harvest crops should be
15 considered agricultural vehicles for the purpose of registration and
16 permits.

17
18 VTFB supports a mechanism that enables farmers and custom
19 operators to purchase highway diesel fuel tax-free at the point of
20 purchase. (2006)

21
22 VTFB supports allowing tandem trailers on interstate
23 highways. We also support permitting trucks with agricultural or
24 forest product overweight permits authority to use interstate
25 highways, where feasible to substantially shorten trips. (2006)

26
27 VTFB supports increased VTRANS focus on needed repair and
28 maintenance on state highways and bridges. (Franklin 2015)

29
30 VTFB recommends that interstate highways allow the same
31 weight limits that are presently allowed on secondary highways.

32
33 VTFB supports increased Vtrans focus on repair and
34 maintenance of right of way fences along the Interstate system
35 bordering land where animals are actively being pastured, not only
36 for the safety of motorists, but also to fulfill the promise made to
37 landowners when the system was built. (2013)

38 VTFB supports legislation to provide reciprocal agreements,
39 regulations and laws for truck travel between all New England

1 states and New York State.

2
3 VTFB supports cooperation between town and state highway
4 officials and local farmers to develop reasonable solutions to
5 problems such as left-hand turns by farm machinery. We support
6 educating drivers about slow-moving vehicle signs in driver's
7 manuals and public information campaigns.

8
9 VTFB supports continued improvement of U.S. Route 2 as the
10 primary east-west corridor through northern New England.

11
12 VTFB supports a sales tax exemption on trucks registered as
13 agricultural. (2007)

14
15 VTFB supports the availability of natural gas for cars and
16 trucks.

17
18 VTFB supports continuation of the weight limit exemption of
19 ag service vehicles (feed, fertilizers and ag trucks). (2005)

20
21 VTFB encourages a cooperative effort between the farming
22 community and Vermont law enforcement to improve awareness,
23 understanding and voluntary compliance regarding laws that
24 regulate flying debris from mobile equipment. (2003)

25
26 VTFB supports not including incidents involving farm tractors
27 on drivers' records when the farmer/employee is not at fault.
28 (2003)

29
30 VTFB believes that when a farmer delivers product processed
31 on the farm for retail sale in his own truck, he should not be
32 required to meet CDL or hours of service requirements. (2006)

33
34 **WATER QUALITY /RAPs**

40

35
36 VTFB opposes the rulemaking of the Clean Water Restoration
37 Act (HR2421) of 2007 that would provide regulatory authority to
38 the Environmental Protection Agency over all water and would
39 require the enforcement of Clean Water Act requirements. (2007)

1 VTFB opposes state or federal designation of ground water as
2 a public trust. (2006)

3
4 VTFB supports the right of private property owners to repair
5 flood damage with prompt permission from NRCS with no lengthy
6 permit process and to remove gravel from streams without yard
7 limits in cooperation with the Army Corps of Engineers.

8
9 VTFB supports easing restrictions to allow landowners to keep
10 the water channels and stream banks clear so that the 100-year
11 flood stage does not turn from the 100-year flood to a 30- or 15-
12 year flood where bridges become dams, causing homes to become
13 isolated from emergency care and fire protection. (2011)

14
15 VTFB opposes inclusion of state rivers in the federal Wild and
16 Scenic River program. Further, we urge that buffer zones adjacent
17 to major rivers in Vermont not be larger than 25 feet, unless an
18 easement is purchased from the landowner so affected. Land set
19 aside in buffer strips should be excluded from property taxation,
20 since its economic use has been excluded.

21
22 VTFB resolves that the 25-foot buffer requirement be
23 maintained and only required on waterways with year-round
24 running water. (2008)

25
26 VTFB urges Lake Champlain Basin Committee to redirect
27 funding from such efforts as implementing a TMDL analysis and
28 watershed planning. The committee should focus on implementing
29 solutions to known causes of phosphorous runoff, including urban
30 and suburban sources. (2001)

31
32 VTFB Supports further study and review of plans to regulate
33 tile Drainage on Farms to comply with RAPS. (Required Agricultural
34 Practices) (Addison 2017)

35
36 VTFB supports legislation to fund the Clean Water Fund by
37 raising all monies in an equitable way with all persons receiving
38 the benefits of clean water to contribute to same. (Washington
39 2017)

1
2 VTFB supports continued funding for the implementation of
3 BMP's. VFB further supports having the Vermont AAFM make
4 available matching funds to all types of farming for non-point
5 source water pollution control. Funds should be available for any
6 farm construction of pollution control and containment equipment
7 or structures. (2010)
8

9 VTFB opposes any attempt to assess fees for water withdrawal
10 for recreational, commercial, municipal or agricultural use. (2001)
11

12 VTFB supports establishing a committee of qualified
13 Agricultural, Industrial, as well as other industry stake holders to
14 guide officials in determining changes to any Federal Water Quality
15 Standards, Laws or Rules. (2014)
16

17 VTFB opposes connecting water quality initiative penalties
18 with the voluntary, contractual UVA program. (2015)(in taxation-
19 property also)
20

21 VTFB supports the development of free market contracts for
22 water quality amelioration to allow cooperative solutions agreed to
23 among responsible parties. (2015)
24

25 VTFB supports the RAPs regarding partial exclusion of livestock
26 from Vermont's Waters of the State, but wants it to go no further
27 toward permanently excluding livestock from the Vermont's Waters
28 of the State. (2016)
29

30 **WETLANDS**

40

31
32 VTFB strongly supports the NRCS as the sole agency for
33 agricultural wetland issues and delineations. We support hay land
34 being included in the delineation of crops for the purpose of
35 establishing prior converted wetlands. We oppose the NRCS being
36 part of any other national agency than the USDA.
37

38 We urge the state and federal government to implement a

1 definition based on sound scientific evidence of protected wetlands
2 which does not include artificially-created farm ponds, beaver
3 dams or drainage ditches and to clarify wetlands regulations to
4 ensure that land which is defined as wetlands is wet, i.e.
5 completely saturated for at least a majority of days in the growing
6 season in a year of average rainfall. Land which is dry for the
7 majority of the growing season in a year of average rainfall should
8 not be classified as wetland.

9
10 VTFB supports the conversion of insignificant, Class 2
11 wetlands for agricultural purposes by the granting of general use
12 permits. (2001)

13
14 VTFB believes that private property owners be fairly
15 compensated when restrictions are placed on private wetlands.
16 (2007)

17
18 VTFB supports the current definition of wetlands in Vermont
19 state law Title 10, Chapter 37 Section 902(5). “Wetlands” means
20 those areas of the state that are inundated by surface or
21 groundwater with a frequency sufficient to support significant
22 vegetation or aquatic life that depend on saturated or seasonally
23 saturated soil conditions for growth and reproduction. Such areas
24 include, but are not limited to, marshes, swamps, sloughs,
25 potholes, fens, river and lake overflows, mud flats, bogs and ponds,
26 but excluding such areas as grow food or crops in connection with
27 farming activities. (2007)

28 29 **WILDLIFE**

41

30
31 VTFB believes that the designation of the entire Connecticut
32 River Watershed as the Silvio Conte National Refuge has serious
33 implications for farming and forestry. We support efforts that
34 would:

- 35 1) Remove farm and forestland from the refuge.
- 36 2) Address the concerns of landowners and private property
37 owners.
- 38 3) Protect agricultural and forestry operations in the
39 watershed from adverse impacts of refuge activities.

1 4) Coordinate activities of the Farm Bureaus of Vermont,
2 New Hampshire, Connecticut and Massachusetts to address
3 these concerns.

4 5) Restrict the introduction or reintroduction of any plant or
5 animal species onto state- or federal-owned land in the
6 Conte refuge.
7

8 VTFB recommends that there be moose nuisance and damage
9 legislation that provides compensation to the victim, including the
10 option of the moose itself.
11

12 VTFB recommends that 10% of the moose permits be issued to
13 resident applicants of the management unit in which the moose
14 hunt is to be held. We support legislation that would allow the legal
15 taking of a moose, turkey, deer or bear which is causing damage to
16 crops, fences, agricultural structures or other valuable property by
17 the property owner or his designee on their property. (2003) and to
18 increase the season length and number of turkeys to be taken each
19 year. (2013)
20

21 VTFB requests that regulation of trapping continue to be overseen
22 by the Vermont Wildlife Advisory Board, and by the wildlife
23 biologists employed by the Department of Wildlife. We oppose
24 expanding the Advisory Board to include members of the public
25 whose only interest is in halting all trapping and hunting. (Lamoille
26 2017)
27

28 We urge that the AFBF oppose the authority of the U.S. Fish
29 and Wildlife Service to enforce the Endangered Species Act.
30

31 VTFB supports the right of farmers to protect land and assets
32 on the farm from damage caused by beavers on or off their own
33 land. This is accomplished through directing jurisdiction to the
34 Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department that shall respond to
35 landowner requests, provide a solution to the problem and resolve
36 landowner disputes. (2002)
37

38 VTFB supports regular application of lampricide to Vermont
39 streams or rivers feeding Lake Champlain. (2011)

3
4 VTFB supports a level playing field for imports of meat, dairy
5 and other agricultural products, including policy that would:

- 6 1) Apply U.S. domestic standards for safety, quality and
7 labeling.
- 8 2) Levy duties to offset foreign subsidies.
- 9 3) Implement country of origin labeling.
- 10 4) Mandate use of ingredient contents in accounting for
11 import quotas for food products.
- 12 5) Apply an assessment on all imported dairy products for
13 dairy promotion equivalent to that paid on domestic
14 products.
- 15 6) Charge \$1.00 per head for beef promotion, including all
16 imported beef to be distributed in the U.S.

17
18 The United States should not allow imports of animal products
19 from nations harboring foot and mouth disease or from countries
20 that receive and transship such products. (2011)

21
22 VTFB encourages the development and support of federal and
23 state programs that enhance the ability of private and cooperative
24 businesses to export farm products, including value-added
25 products such as dairy. New entrants into the export market
26 should be encouraged, rather than stifled, as under current USDA
27 rules. Specifically, USDA should revoke the rule that requires
28 previous export experience.

29
30
31 The United States should not allow dairy products that require
32 U.S. Grade A sanitary standards to be imported from nations
33 lacking Grade A-inspection of their dairy farms, milk
34 transportation systems and dairy processing plants. (2005)

35
36 VTFB backs the effort to classify milk protein concentrates
37 (MPC) as a dairy product and have tariffs and promotion fees
38 applied. (2003)

1 VTFB supports agricultural reciprocity with all nations,
2 provided these nations have the same regulations on health and
3 safety of the food. (2010)
4

5 **Internal Resolutions**

6 VTFB encourages Agricultural organizations to cultivate positive
7 relationships with the local media. (Orleans 2017)
8

9 VTFB commends the staff for doing an outstanding job.
10

11 VTFB recommends that its Executive Committee study the
12 opportunity of offering legal counsel as a membership tool.
13

14 VTFB directs the Executive Committee for a motion of appreciation
15 regarding Remi Bourdeau and his passing and for Bourdeau
16 Brothers Inc. support of agriculture since 1974.
17

18 E-mail policy to county presidents prior to annual meeting
19

20 Provide employers a Packet to distribute to their employees regarding VTFB
21 member benefits.
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