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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 Appraisal
- 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 Appraisal or Current Use
- UVM: University of Vermont
- VAAFV: Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets
- VANR: Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
- VDEC: Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation
- VTC: Vermont Technical College

Purpose of Vermont Farm Bureau

Vermont Farm Bureau 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 Vermont Farm Bureau is to be the unifying voice of Vermont agriculture. (RC 2017)

Vermont Farm Bureau core values are to be: family oriented, inclusive, innovative, member-driven and non-partisan (RC 2017)

1 Vermont Farm Bureau is a member of the American Farm
2 Bureau Federation, (AFBF), a national organization of farmers and
3 ranchers in all 50 states and Puerto Rico. The positions expressed
4 in these pages represent Vermont Farm Bureau's views on various
5 issues as they relate to Vermont. The positions of the national
6 Farm Bureau organization collectively are expressed through the
7 American Farm Bureau Federation.

8
9 Vermont Farm Bureau is local, county, state, national and
10 international in its scope and influence and is non-partisan, non-
11 sectarian and non-secret in character. Farm Bureau is the voice of
12 agricultural producers of all kinds, all sizes and all levels as
13 determined by its members.

14
15 **AGRICULTURE, GENERAL**

1

16
17 A strong and prosperous agricultural economy is vital to
18 Vermont's rural quality of life. We urge that the economic viability
19 of Vermont's agricultural industry be paramount as public policies
20 are formulated. In this regard, Vermont Farm Bureau specifically
21 supports:

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

1 farm policy. (2013)

2
3 Vermont Farm Bureau strongly support groups, organizations
4 and institutions, which help strengthen Vermont agriculture.

5
6 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the diversification of farming
7 to include additional activities such as agritourism and on-farm
8 rural enterprises. (2016).

9
10 Vermont Farm Bureau supports all local USDA committees,
11 particularly FSA and NRCS, to consist of farmers who are elected
12 by local farmers. And these farmers should maintain leadership
13 roles in boards and committees that have direct oversight of their
14 business practices. (2010)

15
16 Vermont Farm Bureau encourages increased funding by the
17 USDA in the form of low interest loans and grants to be used for a
18 variety of alternative manure management practices. (2011)

19
20 Vermont Farm Bureau seeks greater commitment from the
21 UVM Extension to engage with concerns of the working farm and
22 forest communities and welcomes dialogue about the future of the
23 UVM Extension. (2016)

24
25 Vermont Farm Bureau supports UVM and VTC maintaining
26 their dairy and livestock programs for the purpose of hands-on,
27 experiential student learning in all phases of farming. (2011)
28 (2016)

29
30 Vermont Farm Bureau supports adequate funding of the UVM
31 Extension, and we offer our support to maintain its specialized
32 ability to work with the agricultural and rural communities,
33 particularly in subject areas and localities not serviced by other
34 agencies. (2011) (2015)

35
36 Vermont Farm Bureau encourages UVM Extension to add

1 dairy and livestock specialists. (2016)

2
3 Vermont Farm Bureau supports agricultural enterprises of
4 any size or commodity using traditional or non-traditional methods
5 that serve small or large markets. We support all agricultural
6 production, including organic, provided that the producer follows
7 Required Agricultural Practices (RAP's) or Accepted Management
8 Practices (AMP's) for forestland.

9
10 Vermont Farm Bureau supports full funding of the Farm
11 Agronomics Practices (FAPs) program. (2010)

12
13 Vermont Farm Bureau supports continued operation of Farm
14 First to provide Vermont farmers and their families with access to
15 free and confidential support to address any personal or work
16 related issues. (2017)

17
18 Vermont Farm Bureau supports all efforts of UVM to
19 strengthen Vermont agriculture, acknowledging its "land grant"
20 origins and urges UVM leadership to be guided in key policy
21 decisions by its agricultural heritage. Further, we believe UVM
22 should:

- 23 1) Make the educational needs of Vermonters its priority;
- 24 2) Expand and improve the four-year agricultural program
25 at an affordable tuition;
- 26 3) Retain the title of the agricultural school in perpetuity
27 and keep Vermont's agricultural community as its primary
28 focus.

29
30 Vermont Farm Bureau urges UVM to reaffirm Vermont's
31 agricultural heritage of working forests by re-attaining their
32 accreditation by the Society for American Foresters. (2010)

33
34 Vermont Farm Bureau urges the Legislature to appropriate
35 adequate funding with a minimum annual stipend of \$200,000 to
36 support county fairs and field days.

1
2 Vermont Farm Bureau encourages active participation in
3 Vermont's county fairs and field days by the Vermont AAFM.
4 Furthermore, we urge sufficient resources be allocated by the
5 Agency on an annual basis to maintain a first-class Vermont
6 Building at the Eastern States Exposition (the "Big E") to both
7 underline the importance of agriculture in Vermont and educate
8 the public on Vermont's agriculture heritage and industry.

9
10 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the Vermont Working Lands
11 Enterprise Board and urges the close monitoring of the Fund it
12 oversees. (2013) (2015)

13
14 Vermont Farm Bureau supports legislation to prevent
15 unauthorized persons with fraudulent and false pretenses from
16 gaining access to agricultural production facilities including
17 employment by making such activities a criminal offense. (2014)
18 (2015) (2016)

19
20 Vermont Farm Bureau supports industrial hemp as a
21 cultivated crop for uses such as seed, fiber and oil. (2014)

22
23 Vermont Farm Bureau supports efforts to study and publicly
24 provide a fuller understanding of agriculture and forestry as
25 economic engines in the state's economy. (2014)

26 **AGRICULTURE AGENCY**

27 **2**

28
29 Vermont Farm Bureau supports cooperation between the
30 VAAFMM, UVM and other institutions with laboratory facilities to
31 assure that the Vermont agricultural community has access to
32 laboratory facilities (such as diagnostic and pathology) for
33 agricultural science issues including animal health, public health,
34 seed and feed, and fertilizer. (2013)

35
36 Vermont Farm Bureau recognizes the VAAFMM supports the

1 largest industry in this state and requires the necessary resources
2 to maintain its leadership and regulatory oversight.

3
4 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the role of the VAAFMM in
5 maintaining all oversight and enforcement of regulations regarding
6 permitting, environmental regulations and inspections of farms
7 and to allow time for current regulations to realize their potential.
8 (2013)

9
10 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the definition of “farming” in
11 10 VSA 6001 (22) and this should be used to define an agricultural
12 operation by all State Agencies. (2010) (2017)

13
14 Vermont Farm Bureau supports making the Secretary of
15 VAAFMM (or his or her designee) a permanent member of the UVM’s
16 Board of Trustees. (2008)

17
18 Vermont Farm Bureau supports adequately funding the
19 VAAFMM for licensing and regulations of pet shops by the State
20 Veterinarian’s office. The related licensing fees should be directed
21 to this program (2017)

22
23 Vermont Farm Bureau requests VAAFMM cooperate with the
24 Auditor of Accounts or other body to demonstrate that a
25 preponderance of Agricultural Development grants made within
26 this state result in direct benefits to farmers. 2018

27
28 **AGRITOURISM** **3**

29
30 Vermont Farm Bureau supports tourist information signage
31 policy that is fair to all businesses. (2016)

32
33 Vermont Farm Bureau should work closely with VAAFMM to
34 develop signage for state highways to direct the public to
35 agricultural businesses and destinations.

1 Vermont Farm Bureau supports changes in Vermont’s sign
2 laws to:

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

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

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

10
11 Vermont Farm Bureau supports clarification of the recently
12 passed Act 143 (H.663) which intended to promote and facilitate
13 the economic viability of Vermont's farms, so misinterpretation of
14 the law by town planners ceases. Consideration should be made
15 so that accessory farm businesses are not subject to a site plan
16 review. (2018)

17 **BIOTECHNOLOGY**

18 **4**

19
20 Vermont Farm Bureau, recognizing the importance of
21 biotechnology to the future economic well being of the state,
22 encourages funding efforts to develop biotech industries. We
23 oppose placing prohibitions or undue restrictions on the
24 development of biotechnology products which have been deemed
25 safe and effective by appropriate regulatory agencies. Further, we
26 oppose creating lists of users of agricultural biotechnology, which
27 may target users unfairly.

28
29 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes any legislation restricting the
30 uses of any product, biotech or organic, that has been approved by
31 the USDA, FDA, EPA, etc. We believe that existing legal safeguards
32 are adequate to protect all farmers & consumers. (2006) (2015)

33
34 Vermont Farm Bureau supports unbiased, scientifically based
35 evaluations concerning human and animal safety and
36 wholesomeness, as well as the environmental impacts of

1 biotechnology and the right of farmers to use these products based
2 on these evaluations.

3
4 **COMMODITIES**

5

6 Vermont Farm Bureau supports continuation and
7 improvement of the Vermont state meat inspection program under
8 the direction of the VAAFM. We support national legislation to
9 allow meat inspected under the Vermont program to be sold in
10 interstate commerce. We support a meat grading system to be
11 implemented, which will enable livestock producers to expand
12 their market. We encourage the VAAFM to continue to promote
13 local and regional markets for Vermont livestock raised for
14 slaughter.

15
16 Vermont Farm Bureau urges passage of legislation which
17 eases the federal inspection process required for interstate
18 shipment of meat which already passes standards.

19
20 Vermont Farm Bureau urges the Vermont Beef Industry
21 Council to increase support of dairy beef. (2011)(2017)

22
23 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes vertical integration when it
24 substantially reduces market competition in the beef industry.
25 (2006) (2016)

26
27 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the AFBF requests Congress
28 and appropriate regulatory agencies monitor commodity markets
29 to prevent price manipulation and promote an unencumbered free
30 market for agricultural products. (2011)

31
32 Vermont Farm Bureau urges all non-producer owned
33 agricultural processors and handlers be bonded at no less than
34 60% of any claim value for which they are found liable.

35
36 Vermont Farm Bureau asks funds for disaster relief and crop

1 failure payments be paid directly to the affected farmer and may
2 also apply to a landowner if it is determined that the land had lost
3 functional or marketable value because of the disaster.

4 Qualification for disaster relief should be extended to isolated
5 individual events, instead of requiring whole county designations.
6 (2001)

7
8 Vermont Farm Bureau urges the Congress to provide
9 adequate funding for school breakfast and lunch programs offering
10 the choice of milk with all perishable food products to be served at
11 proper temperatures. We support programs such as the Women,
12 Infants and Children (WIC) Program and the Special Milk Program.
13 (2012)

14
15 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the expansion of the “Farm to
16 Family” program for producer-only farmers’ markets to include
17 eggs, meat and dairy (including full-fat dairy). (2007) (2018)

18
19 Vermont Farm Bureau supports use of locally produced food
20 in school lunch programs. (2002)

21
22 **CONSUMER PROTECTION** **6**

23
24 Vermont Farm Bureau supports including trucks with gross
25 vehicle weights of one ton or more and agricultural equipment
26 under Vermont’s lemon law statute.

27
28 Vermont Farm Bureau supports all out-of-state fruits,
29 vegetables and horticultural products offered for sale in Vermont
30 should bear signs clearly stating the place of origin of such
31 produce at the point of purchase. (2001)

32
33 Vermont Farm Bureau requests that all foods have a Country
34 of Origin label that is WTO compliant. (2013) (2015)

35
36 **CROP & LIVESTOCK PROTECTION & ENHANCEMENT** **7**

1
2 Vermont Farm Bureau recommends pesticide regulation and
3 pesticide monitoring programs remain in the control of the VAAF. M.
4

5 Vermont Farm Bureau believes in the finding of fact
6 concerning restriction of insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides or
7 herbicides under the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA), appellant
8 should be required to show actual harm rather than calculated
9 potentials. (2016)
10

11 Congress should monitor FQPA implementation vigorously to
12 ensure compliance with legislative intent. (2016)
13

14 **DAIRY**

8

15
16 Vermont Farm Bureau supports dairy supply management
17 initiatives, including mandatory, that will assist in creating
18 greater price stability. We support a state, national and industry-
19 supported, long-term, counter cyclical program addressing the
20 volatility in milk pricing that will provide for the viability of the
21 dairy industry. Any program should recognize the need for
22 regional production of milk for food security purposes. Further,
23 any program should recognize the variability of significant input
24 costs, World Trade Organization compliance and reflect the true
25 value of surplus milk. (2011) (2015) (2016)
26

27 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the innovative development
28 of new dairy products and a way to profitably market these
29 products in a national and international market. (2010)
30

31 Vermont Farm Bureau supports working with cooperatives
32 and other agencies to retain the Federal Milk Market Order
33 system. We oppose any reclassification of reconstituted milk under
34 the Federal Order program.
35

1 Vermont Farm Bureau supports reform to the price discovery
2 mechanism for classified pricing. (2010)

3
4 Vermont Farm Bureau resolves to work with dairy
5 cooperatives in supporting key issues and policies being developed
6 in the Vermont Legislature. (2010)

7
8 Vermont Farm Bureau recommends national dairy policy
9 include:

- 10 1) An increase in solids not fat (SNF) minimum standards in
11 fluid milk to match the California standards;
12 2) A promotion assessment equivalent to the domestic
13 promotion assessment levied on all imported products and
14 commodities. (2011)

15
16 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a regional effort through
17 legislation to ensure that dairy farmers receive a fair share of the
18 consumer's dollar for fluid dairy products. (2009)

19
20 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the decrease of the industry
21 somatic cell count in fluid milk from dairy cows to 400,000
22 cells/ml to be competitive in the global marketplace. (2012)(2017)

23
24 Vermont Farm Bureau requests whole milk (total fat content
25 3.25%) be offered as a choice in all schools as part of the school
26 lunch program. (2016)

27
28 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the use of raw milk in the
29 production of cheese aged over sixty days, provided producers
30 follow Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs). (2009) (2016)

31
32 Vermont Farm Bureau should ask the Vermont Legislature to
33 amend current law to require all retail raw milk be tested to the
34 same standard or higher standards as pasteurized milk and the
35 producers be inspected the same as commercial farms. (2014)
36 (2018)

1
2 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes any changes to the Capper-
3 Volstead Act that allows farmers to market milk collectively without
4 violating antitrust laws. (2007)

5
6 Vermont Farm Bureau supports truth in labeling that only
7 beverages produced by mammals be labeled as “milk.” (2010)
8 (2016)

9
10 Vermont Farm Bureau urges the USDA to increase the Tariff
11 Aid provided to dairy producers. (2018)

12 **DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS**

13 **9**

14
15 Vermont Farm Bureau supports development rights
16 agreements containing specific time frames with a defined date of
17 commencement and termination with all easements and rights
18 reverting to the original grantor or successor upon expiration of
19 the contract. (2017)

20
21 Vermont Farm Bureau believes the following principles should
22 apply if public funds are used to purchase development rights:

- 23 1. Fair market value should be paid to the landowner;
- 24 2. All tax obligations should be fully disclosed and
25 explained prior to purchase;
- 26 3. Any restrictions on use of the land should be clear and
27 limited to maintain a viable working landscape and allow
28 traditional uses, as well as innovative agricultural uses, such
29 as farm stands, bed and breakfasts, recreation, etc. for profit;
30 (2003)
- 31 4. Agreements should not restrict any new farming
32 methods, technology or the ability to diversify or change into
33 other types of agriculture such as agritourism. (2012)

34
35 Vermont Farm Bureau believes property with development
36 rights removed should be taxed at its productive agricultural or

1 forestry value and the state Division of Property Valuation and
2 Review should publish and distribute guidelines to assist local
3 listers in equitably assessing these restricted lands.

4
5 Vermont Farm Bureau believes the designation of land as
6 “prime agricultural soils” should not be the sole reason for a
7 zoning or land use review board to reject a proposed development
8 (2006)(2017)

9
10 Vermont Farm Bureau believes the Vermont Land Trust and
11 similar agencies should be encouraged to foster small-scale
12 agriculture or commercial greenhouse and garden operations by
13 assisting in conservation of small parcels in high-impact areas.
14 (2006)

15
16 Vermont Farm Bureau supports continued funding of the
17 Vermont Housing Conservation Board. We oppose lowering the
18 initial stewardship allocation and support the requirement that the
19 easement holder pays continuing stewardship costs. (2012)

20
21 **DISEASE, INSECTS, PREDATORS & PESTS** **10**

22
23 Vermont Farm Bureau supports continuous appropriations
24 from the Vermont Legislature to study, educate and train the
25 agricultural community about Johnes disease. (2010)

26
27 Vermont Farm Bureau supports preventative programs for
28 chronic infectious diseases of dairy cattle, BSE (bovine spongiform
29 encephalitis), tuberculosis and brucellosis to provide vaccination
30 and control programs as necessary through a combination of
31 private and public funding, including adequate funding for the
32 Vermont state vet’s office within the AAFM, and that all such
33 measures should be considered part of an overall national security
34 initiative. (2001)

35
36 Vermont Farm Bureau supports awareness training and

1 preparedness planning among producers and state animal health
2 authorities for, emerging and exotic diseases of concern to
3 livestock. (2014) (2015)

4
5 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a diverse and healthy wildlife
6 population in Vermont. We actively support state, regional and
7 national policies recognizing farm animals and agricultural crops
8 are at least as important as wildlife. We urge management policies
9 recognize the priority of protecting both public safety and the
10 economic viability of agricultural enterprises from diseases such as
11 rabies, giardia and distemper. Further, we urge policies protect
12 agriculture from predators, which cause economic harm and
13 threaten crops and domestic animals. (2012)

14 Vermont Farm Bureau recommends the Vermont Fish and
15 Wildlife Department pay Fair Market Value for proven losses to
16 dairy cattle, beef cattle and sheep from coyote attacks.

17
18 Vermont Farm Bureau supports livestock and crop producers'
19 right to shoot predators and other nuisance wildlife at baited
20 locations using lighting with prior notification of wildlife officials.

21
22 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes any law or regulations
23 prohibiting the use of steel traps, including leg hold traps, for
24 capturing predators, varmints or fur-bearing animals.

25
26 **EDUCATION**

11

27
28 Vermont Farm Bureau asks UVM and all state colleges to
29 require all students to take a course offered by the College of
30 Agriculture that covers issues such as how food is produced, what
31 is required for inputs and how much land is needed to feed the
32 world in a fair and balanced way. (2011)

33
34 Vermont Farm Bureau requests the Governor appoint at least
35 one active farmer to the UVM Board of Trustees. (2011)

1
2 Vermont Farm Bureau urges the VT Agency of Education to
3 recognize the importance of agricultural knowledge at the
4 elementary, secondary and post-secondary levels and provide both
5 financial and technical support for Agriculture in the Classroom
6 program.

7
8 Vermont Farm Bureau supports agricultural and natural
9 resource education and establishing agricultural and natural
10 resource education programs at regional technical centers and
11 high schools. (amended 2008) The Vermont Department of
12 Education should continue to fund and support the FFA
13 agricultural advisor position. (2012)

14
15 Vermont Farm Bureau encourages UVM Extension to fill the
16 vacant specialist positions with agronomy, livestock, dairy &
17 Production Agriculture Specialists (2017)

18
19 Vermont Farm Bureau supports and encourages agriculture
20 education in the classroom and the use of local farm products in
21 our schools. (2009)

22
23 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a Dairy in the Classroom
24 program teaching young students (K-4th grade) about dairy farming.
25 (2018)

26
27 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the full funding of the
28 National Veterinary Service Act of 2003 and the establishment and
29 full funding of a Vermont net tuition repayment program for large
30 animal vets in under-served areas. (2008)

31
32 Vermont Farm Bureau urges creation of an accredited four-
33 year professional development course for agriculture teachers.
34 (2012)

35
36 Vermont Farm Bureau calls for the establishment of a

1 permanent clearinghouse for the collection and distribution of
2 curriculum materials and educational resources on agriculture,
3 including videos, computer software, Internet sites and farm tour
4 information to be staffed collaboratively by the Vermont Agency of
5 Education and the VAAFM. (2012)

6
7 Vermont Farm Bureau supports development and
8 introduction of a comprehensive curriculum for elementary and
9 secondary schools on agriculture and forestry with balanced
10 content bases on sound science. We encourage teaching students
11 about production agriculture, animals, nutrition and forestry.
12

13 Vermont Farm Bureau supports an apprenticeship program to
14 train slaughterhouse personnel by UVM, Vermont Technical
15 College (VTC), vocational centers or any combination thereof.
16 (2012)

17
18 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the growth of farm
19 apprenticeship programs to be administered and funded through
20 the VAAFM in Vermont institutions and organizations for the
21 purpose of gaining on-farm practical experience for those students
22 graduating with an interest in their future in the agricultural
23 industry. (2007) (2013)

24
25 Vermont Farm Bureau supports continued and increased
26 funding for agricultural programs at VTC, including the 2 + 2
27 (FARMS) program offered in cooperation with UVM. We support a
28 seamless transition between the two institutions for the 2 +
29 2/FARMS program. (2014) (2015) (2016)(2017)

30
31 Vermont Farm Bureau supports an agriculture teaching
32 program at VTC in conjunction with a state college teaching
33 program. (2009)

34
35 Vermont Farm Bureau supports adequate state funding of
36 special education. (2012)

1
2 Vermont Farm Bureau urges the U.S. Congress to fund special
3 education at the 40% level promised when the Equal Educational
4 Opportunities law was passed.

5
6 Vermont Farm Bureau supports local control of schools,
7 voluntary consolidation of schools within a geographic area and
8 maintaining and expanding school choice. (2012) (2015) (2017)

9
10 Vermont Farm Bureau supports repeal of Act 46 which is
11 forcing school consolidation, limiting school choice and may in fact
12 substantially weaken our entire town meeting form of
13 government. (2015)

14
15 Vermont Farm Bureau supports an education finance reform
16 plan, calling on the Governor and Legislature to repeal current
17 education funding laws and enact a new law that incorporates all or
18 some of the following specific recommendations:

- 19 a) Relies less heavily on property taxes;
20 b) Controls education spending without interfering with
21 local decision-making;
22 c) Provides our schools with the resources they need to
23 educate our children;
24 d) Fairly distributes resources and tax burdens throughout
25 our state;
26 e) Supports the Use Value Appraisal (UVA) program or UVA
27 for farmland;
28 f) Supports a plan to allow districts to combine to reduce
29 the number of Supervisory Districts. (2006)

30
31 Vermont Farm Bureau supports school choice and those
32 programs recognizing and holding school systems accountable for
33 the quality and performance of education in our Vermont school
34 systems. (2016)

35
36 Vermont Farm Bureau recognizes the statewide Farm to Plate

1 initiative and will work to educate its' members on the goals and
2 objectives as well as participate in the working groups when
3 possible. (2011)

4
5 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes unfunded education mandates
6 by government. (2007)

7
8 Vermont Farm Bureau supports all aspects of agriculture and
9 the continued operation of a dairy herd by VTC for educational
10 purposes. (2010) (2016)

11
12 **ENDANGERED SPECIES**

12

13
14 Vermont Farm Bureau urges the federal Endangered Species
15 Act differentiate between species truly in danger of extinction and
16 those marginally threatened. We also recommend amendment of
17 the Vermont Threatened and Endangered Species Act to:

18 1) Require state cost sharing and compensation for species
19 preservation; (2011)

20 2) Change the method by which species are added to the
21 threatened or endangered list by making the process more
22 specific and providing automatic annual de-listing of
23 species;

24 3) Provide incentives and/or compensation to private
25 landowners where threatened or endangered species are
26 located;

27 4) Include business representatives and landowners on the
28 Endangered Species Advisory Committee;

29 5) Consider gene banking as an option for preserving
30 species. (2012)

31 6

32 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes listing the lynx, wolf or the
33 Indiana Bat as endangered or threatened species. (2011)

34
35 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes the reintroduction of wolves
36 into Vermont. (2010)

1
2 **ENERGY/UTILITIES, COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY 13**
3

4 Vermont Farm Bureau should be actively involved in any
5 future restructuring of Vermont’s electric utilities. Vermont Farm
6 Bureau supports:

- 7 1) Unrestricted customer choice of electric supplier;
8 2) Reasonable rules to allow consolidation of electric
9 distributors;
10 3) Amendment of Vermont commercial law to allow farmer-
11 owned organizations to serve as consolidators to facilitate
12 negotiation of least-cost rates;
13 4) Equitable treatment of rural customers;
14 5) Vermont utilities profit from power transit business;
15 6) Maintenance of Vermont-based retail distribution
16 companies.
17 7)

18 Vermont Farm Bureau favors efforts to maintain or lower
19 electric rates in Vermont. (2009)
20

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

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

33 Vermont Farm Bureau urges support for regional and national
34 efforts to develop sources of renewable energy from agricultural
35 production and land and to include wind, solar, fiber and hydro,

1
2 Vermont Farm Bureau supports tax breaks and other
3 incentives directed towards renewable on farm energy sources
4 such as wind, solar, hydro, biodiesel, biogas, methane and
5 methane digesters, and wood chip systems, and the development
6 of educational programs providing technical advice in these
7 technologies. (2010)

8
9 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the use of approved outdoor
10 furnaces and should work to ensure that any regulations
11 developed are favorable to the agriculture and forestry
12 communities. (2012)

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

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

22
23 Vermont Farm Bureau supports net metering. (2013)

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

30
31 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes authorizing general sale of
32 motor fuel blends containing greater than 10% ethanol. (2018)

33
34 Vermont Farm Bureau resolves to urge the State of Vermont

1 to do all they can to stabilize carbon dioxide levels in the
2 atmosphere by promoting alternative energy systems and efficient
3 heating and transportation methods. (2010)

4
5 Vermont Farm Bureau supports exploration of reliable and
6 viable alternate energy sources for Vermont. (2014)

7
8 Vermont Farm Bureau urges the Vermont Legislature to
9 prioritize the availability of broadband Internet access to all homes
10 and businesses in the State of Vermont. (2014)

11
12 Vermont Farm Bureau supports increasing the height limits
13 on existing cell towers to reduce the need for additional towers.
14 (2015)

15
16 **ENVIRONMENT**

14

17
18 Vermont Farm Bureau urges Congress to clarify and affirm
19 agriculture is not subject to the Comprehensive Environmental
20 and Liability Act (CERCLA), nor to the Environmental Planning and
21 Community Right to Know Act (EPCRA), correcting
22 misinterpretations of these acts by the Environmental Protection
23 Agency (EPA). (2007)

24
25 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a requirement that all EPA
26 regulations, rulemaking and procedures adopted regarding
27 agriculture and forestry be based on solid, peer-reviewed data and
28 the requirements derived from both the Clean Air Act and the
29 Clean Water Act include standards-based performance goals based
30 on sound science with data subject to peer review. We also request
31 our Congressional delegation support requiring a cost-benefit
32 analysis before implementation of all such regulation. (2010)

33
34 Vermont Farm Bureau should promote the image of Vermont
35 farms as environmentally friendly, sustainable users of the land.

1
2 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the development of a suitable
3 no cost disposal program for discarded tires used in agriculture.
4

5 Vermont Farm Bureau supports creating a voluntary
6 agricultural plastic recycling system which operates statewide and
7 aims to reduce the amount of ag-plastic reaching landfills from
8 Vermont farms. (2018)
9

10 Vermont Farm Bureau supports all regulations governing the
11 uses of Vermont farm and forestland should explicitly acknowledge
12 evidences of human activity are a necessary, pleasing and
13 desirable part of the natural landscape.
14

15 Vermont Farm Bureau encourages cooperation between the
16 Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the VAAFM
17 in providing resources for farmers affected by the perfluorooctanoic
18 acid (PFOA) contamination. We request the DEC and VAAFM to
19 address the increased impact of contaminated water on soils,
20 crops, livestock and the farmers' livelihoods. (2016)
21

22 **EQUINE**

15 **15**

23
24 Vermont Farm Bureau supports full and equal status within
25 agriculture for Vermont's equine business owners. To achieve such
26 status, we support:

- 27 1) Equine business property being eligible as agricultural
28 property in UVA;
- 29 2) Inclusion of the equine businesses under the agricultural
30 sales tax exemptions;
- 31 3) Maintaining an active equine committee within Vermont
32 Farm Bureau;
- 33 4) Trails, parking areas and camping sites for equine
34 activity being made available in Green Mountain National
35 Forest and State lands; (2013) (2015) (2016)
- 36 5) Developing an expanded definition of farm income from

1 equine businesses. (2010) (2013) (2014) (2016)

2
3 Vermont Farm Bureau shall continue to lobby the State of
4 Vermont Office of Workers' Compensation about the unfairness of a
5 single class code (8279) for the Equine Industry in VT. It imposes a
6 serious financial burden to the industry and may even encourage
7 some members to avoid carrying this important coverage. (2015)

8
9 Vermont Farm Bureau supports revision of the Vermont
10 Equine statute to set limitations of liability per incident. (2010)

11
12 **FINANCE**

16

13
14 Vermont Farm Bureau supports permanent and dependable
15 funding of the Vermont Economic Development Authority (VEDA)
16 as a critical source of credit and capital for Vermont farmers.
17 Further, we favor regular increases in the funding to keep pace
18 with the increasing credit needs of farmers and urge VEDA to
19 extend repayment terms to make loans more affordable. (2012)
20 (2016)

21
22 Vermont Farm Bureau supports efforts of the Farm Credit
23 System to ensure adequate credit is available for agriculture.
24 (2006) (2016)

25
26 Vermont Farm Bureau encourages increased funding by the
27 USDA, in the form of low-interest loans and grants, to be used for
28 alternative manure management practices (i.e. anaerobic
29 digesters). (2007) (2016)

30
31 **FOOD QUALITY AND SAFETY**

17

32
33 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the same regulatory and
34 safety standards required for domestically grown products be
35 required for imported products to protect consumer safety and
36 prevent economic advantages. (2013)

1
2 Vermont Farm Bureau supports VAAFm researching
3 installation (at a Food Venture Center or other supportive venue) of
4 a Phyto Sanitary Irradiation device [also known as cold
5 pasteurization] in order to improve the safety and marketability of
6 Vermont produce. (2017)

7
8 **FORESTRY**

18

9
10 Vermont Farm Bureau supports research under the United
11 States Forest Service [USFS] Forest Carbon Accounting
12 Framework, defining the capacity of actively managed forests and
13 forest soils to absorb and retain greenhouse gases such as CO2.
14 This research is published in the annual Forest Inventory Analysis
15 reports and disseminated through the Climate Change Advisors
16 initiative to lawmakers, media, and the public.

17 www.fis.fs.fed.us/forestcarbon

18
19 Vermont Farm Bureau supports United States Forest Service
20 amending its policy regarding fire. We support active timber
21 management for the purpose of reducing destructive wild fire in
22 the Urban/Wild lands Interface, and the encouragement of fire in
23 forest domains where frequent burns are an appropriate
24 management tool. (2016)

25
26 Vermont Farm Bureau supports continuation of traditional
27 uses on the former Champion Paper Company land and all State
28 Forestland for recreational and commercial uses. (2011)

29
30 Vermont Farm Bureau supports exclusive use of Vermont's
31 Acceptable Management Practices (AMP's) to evaluate whether
32 timber harvesting conforms with environmental quality standards.
33 (2006)

34
35 Vermont Farm Bureau supports landowner-based Green
36 Marketing initiatives, which promote use of timber sourced from

1 sustainably managed and privately-owned North American
2 woodlands (such as the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and
3 the American Tree Farm Systems PEFC certification). (2010)

4
5 Vermont Farm Bureau supports that farmers should not be
6 required to obtain zoning permits or environmental review before
7 converting forested land to agricultural uses. (2011)

8
9 Vermont Farm Bureau believes forestland, like all agricultural
10 land, must be economically sustainable to remain viable. In order
11 to maintain forests as a vital part of Vermont's working rural
12 landscape, we urge the following principles apply to all federal,
13 state and local zoning and planning policy regarding forestland:

- 14
15 1) The average annual harvest of forest products should
16 approximate the long-term average annual growth of those
17 forest products;
18 2) Forestland must be assessed for tax purposes at UVA;
19 3) All generally accepted silvicultural tools, including clear
20 cutting and aerial spraying, must be available to owners of
21 forestland;
22 4) In order to promote development of robust value-added
23 wood manufacturing enterprises in rural towns, Vermont
24 should devise business-friendly legal, transportation, energy,
25 communication, economic, tax and regulatory policies; (2006)
26 5) Forest management plans should provide for multiple uses
27 on virtually all lands where feasible. (2012)

28
29 Vermont Farm Bureau believes all government land
30 acquisitions should meet the following conditions:

- 31 1) The state and/or federal government obtain local
32 (municipal) approval before purchasing land in that comm-
33 unity;
34 2) There is no net gain in the amount of land owned or
35 controlled by government as a result of the purchase;
36 3) Government land acquisition should be funded exclusively

1 by sale or trade of existing property;

2 4) Government-owned land should be valued by Listers and
3 pay tax to Towns in the same manner and rates as equivalent
4 privately owned land; (2010)

5 5) The Payments In Lieu Of Taxes [PILOT] must not be
6 reduced by the legislature to save funds for Montpelier at the
7 expense of Towns. (2016)

8
9 Vermont Farm Bureau Supports the revisions to the U.S.
10 Forest Service Roadless Rule, which would protect existing roads
11 and allow construction of new roads for the purpose of harvesting
12 timber, improving wildlife habitat and fighting forest fires. (2005)

13
14 Vermont Farm Bureau supports sustainable timber harvest in
15 the Green Mountain National Forest. (2003)

16
17 Vermont Farm Bureau supports maintaining forest roads on
18 public lands and designation of no additional Roadless areas.
19 Regulations of such roads should be by rule of U.S. Forest Service
20 and not transferred to EPA jurisdiction. (2013)

21
22 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes the Wild Lands Project or any
23 analogous attempt to depopulate forested land in the Northeast
24 Kingdom of Vermont. (2006)

25
26 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes the Conservation and
27 Reinvestment Act (CARA) or any similar acts and recognizes that
28 the private ownership of property is the foundation of a prosperous
29 economy and a free society.

30
31 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes expanded government
32 ownership of working rural lands because of the threat to the
33 resource base of the farm and forest industries, the threat to the
34 tax base of many rural communities and in some cases, the threat
35 to the survival of rural communities.

1 Vermont Farm Bureau supports early successional
2 management on all public lands. (2017)

3
4 Vermont Farm Bureau continues to oppose extension of the
5 Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge, as well as any program for
6 the US government or State government to acquire private lands.
7 (2017)

8
9 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the promotion and
10 maintenance of current sawmills and encourages development of
11 new sites. (2003)

12
13 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a coordinated national and
14 state effort to halt the spread of non-native plants, pathogens or
15 pests destructive to forest productivity, including (but not limited
16 to): Asian Long-horned Beetle (ALB), Emerald Ash Borer, Hemlock
17 Woolly Adelgid and the Garlic Mustard plant. Appropriate measures
18 may include:

- 19 1) Ban on untreated woody materials such as blocking or
20 pallets from China and other countries with potential insect
21 invaders;
- 22 2) Monitoring of populations, both visual and using
23 pheromone traps;
- 24 3) Removal and disposal of all infected trees or clearing of
25 infested sites with appropriate quarantines and enforcement;
- 26 4) Incorporation of identification and eradication information
27 into all continuing education programs conducted for farmers,
28 foresters, loggers and the public, including displays at fairs,
29 conventions and other public events. (2010)

30
31 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the ban on importation of
32 firewood into the State of Vermont. (2014) (2016)

33
34 **GOVERNMENT – STATE**

19

35
36 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes taking funds from the property

1 tax abatement programs for other purposes (2012)

2
3 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes the legalization of the retail
4 sale of recreational marijuana (2015) (2016)

5
6 **HEALTH**

20

7
8 Vermont Farm Bureau supports legislative efforts to address
9 the cost crisis in health care and to make health insurance
10 available and affordable to all Vermonters. (2011)

11
12 Vermont Farm Bureau supports these considerations to be
13 included in any restructuring of health care by the U.S. Congress:

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

22
23 Vermont Farm Bureau supports repeal of the Federal
24 Affordable Care Act of 2010 to permit implementation of health
25 care measures embodying the principles outlined above. (2010)

26
27 Vermont Farm Bureau supports using net income to
28 determine eligibility and premiums if income sensitivity is used as
29 an indicator in any new health insurance initiative (2014) (2015)
30 (2016).

31
32 Vermont Farm Bureau supports legislative efforts to provide a
33 healthcare program that emphasizes free market competition and
34 consumer freedom of choice. (2014) (2015) (2016)(2017)

35
36 Vermont Farm Bureau encourages farm organizations to work

1 together to provide lower cost health insurance. (2018)

2
3 Vermont Farm Bureau supports maintaining our rural
4 hospitals.

5
6 Vermont Farm Bureau believes the Legislature and Executive
7 Branch should re-examine, revise and repeal laws and regulations
8 that mandate joint and severable liability for excessive losses by
9 health insurers, and laws and regulations that prohibit or
10 discourage health insurers from creating insurance products that
11 provide consumers and businesses greater freedom of choice with
12 greater personal responsibility, by charging premiums that allow
13 discounts for age, occupation, healthy behavior and coverage.

14
15 Vermont Farm Bureau urges further study of the role of
16 animal fats and hydrogenated vegetable oils in human health.
17 Vermont Farm Bureau requests research regarding the positive
18 relationship between intake of dairy products and bone density
19 measurements throughout the human life span be done before any
20 change in the recommended intake of dairy products (particularly
21 of milk as a beverage of choice during periods of growth). (2012)

22
23 Vermont Farm Bureau supports “Fit and Healthy Kids,” an
24 interdepartmental cooperation between the Vermont Department of
25 Health and the Department of Education, with the goal of improving
26 child nutrition by promoting a healthy diet of fresh food from local
27 farms. (2010)

28
29 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes any new payroll taxes to fund
30 any health insurance initiatives. Any health care reform should
31 merge health insurance with workers’ compensation. (2014) (2015)

32
33 **LABOR**

34
35 Vermont Farm Bureau supports efforts by VT Dept. of Forests

1 and Parks to find ways to reduce the premiums for Workers
2 Compensation Insurance, and directs staff to assist in the effort to
3 remodel Vermont's badly damaged Worker's Compensation laws to
4 permit employer cooperatives to create safety and loss prevention
5 networks. (2017)
6

7 Vermont Farm Bureau supports workers' compensation
8 reform initiatives that address the need for accessible and
9 affordable workers' compensation insurance in the State of
10 Vermont which would improve delivery of service to injured
11 employees, reduce the administrative costs imposed on employers,
12 simplify the claims process and stabilize the program. We also ask
13 that benefits be the same as bordering states to give us a level
14 playing field. (2010) (2016) (2017) (2018)
15

16 Vermont Farm Bureau supports clarifying and making
17 uniform across all State of Vermont agencies how contract and
18 independent works are classified for Workers' Compensation,
19 Unemployment Insurance and other employment mandates.
20 (2016)
21

22 Vermont Farm Bureau supports immigration reform that
23 would allow for the use of migrant workers year round on dairy
24 farms for a minimum of 3 years and asks that the U.S. Labor
25 Secretary revisit the unfavorable ruling that did not treat dairy
26 farms the same as sheep farms. (2012).
27

28 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the issue of benefits provided
29 by the Jamaican Central Labor Organization should not risk the
30 future of the H2A program and its successful implementation in
31 Vermont and New England. Vermont Farm Bureau further asks
32 that the US Department of Homeland Security continue to permit
33 employer deductions for payments to JCLO. (2012)
34

35 Vermont Farm Bureau asks the Vermont Legislature pass a
36 resolution to urge the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and

1 the U.S. Department of Labor to coordinate efforts to ensure the
2 reliable and timely issuance of H2A visas for Jamaican and other
3 migrant workers and the predictable supply of high quality labor
4 for Vermont producers. (2012)

5
6 Vermont Farm Bureau supports legislation to exempt payment
7 of unemployment benefits to seasonal employees except during the
8 seasonal period of employment. Further, we oppose any increase
9 in unemployment benefits.

10
11 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes inconsistent and heavy-
12 handed enforcement by the ICE of cases involving undocumented
13 farm workers. We urge Congress to simplify visa procedures for
14 farm workers, to recognize the human rights of persons who enter
15 this country seeking work and to lessen the penalties against
16 employers who hire foreign workers who possess valid documents
17 and to include a reasonable path to citizenship for those interested
18 laborers. (2008)

19
20 Vermont Farm Bureau resolves Vermont farm employers
21 should not be responsible for the no-match IDs of employees or
22 subject to any penalties as a result. (2007)

23
24 Vermont Farm Bureau supports aggressive action to improve
25 the availability of foreign guest workers for dairy and other year-
26 round agricultural operations (2012)

27
28 Vermont Farm Bureau strongly encourages a coordinated
29 federal policy to support the H2A program for seasonal guest
30 workers for orchard, vegetable, fruit and other agricultural
31 operations. (2011)

32
33 Vermont Farm Bureau asks the U.S. Department of Labor to
34 clarify child labor laws so children of parents who are part owners
35 of a farm can work on that farm. (2011)

2
3 Vermont Farm Bureau urges the Legislature to minimize the
4 legal tort liability of agricultural businesses as it adds undue costs
5 and is contrary to the public interest.

6
7 Vermont Farm Bureau supports legislation to make
8 agritourism providers immune from civil liability for harm
9 sustained by a participant if the harm is the result of an inherent
10 risk in the activity and not gross negligence, intentional
11 misconduct, or recklessness of the provider. (2016)(2017)

12
13 Vermont Farm Bureau supports protecting private property
14 owners from lawsuits by persons who enter their property with or
15 without permission.

16
17 Vermont Farm Bureau urges the Legislature to replace the
18 “willful and wanton misconduct” standard with an “intentional
19 infliction of harm” standard in the so-called Landowner Liability
20 statute.

21
22 Vermont Farm Bureau requests reforms to Landowner
23 Liability Laws should include provisions to protect landowners
24 from injury which is the result of activities associated with the
25 usual and customary practice of farming or forestry, and the
26 following language be included to further protect private property
27 rights:

28 “The fact a landowner has permitted use, either implied (by
29 not posting the land) or expressed for recreation purposes, does
30 not establish a claim or right, nor can it be used to establish such
31 a claim by the users. The fact a landowner has not posted the
32 land, thereby permitting access, shall not limit or preclude the
33 landowner from excluding or limiting trails or uses at any time in
34 the future.”

35
36 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a “loser pays” or English Rule

1 statute when a lawsuit is ruled to be “frivolous” by the court.

2
3 Vermont Farm Bureau believes the liability of property owners
4 for injury by livestock or guardian animals be strictly limited to
5 cases of gross and willful negligence.

6
7 Vermont Farm Bureau believes the liability of landowners for
8 injuries suffered by the public should be strictly limited except for
9 “intentional infliction of harm,” nor should a landowner be liable
10 for any injury suffered upon a structure erected to comply with a
11 directive from a state or federal agency.

12
13 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the right of self-defense for
14 property and person. We also support victims of crime being
15 afforded the same rights as criminals and urge amendments to
16 laws and regulations affirming these rights.

17
18 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the lawful ownership and use
19 of sporting firearms by private individuals as provided in the
20 Vermont and United States Constitutions.

21
22 **LIVESTOCK**

23 **23**

24 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the promotion of good animal
25 care practices.

26
27 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a code of ethics for livestock
28 shows, and encourages the enforcement by the show
29 superintendent. (2005)

30
31 Vermont Farm Bureau believes any mandatory uniform
32 national livestock ID program should be supported by federal
33 funds. (2005)

34
35 Vermont Farm Bureau supports premise registration and
36 other farm-friendly measures seeking to reduce the risk of diseases

1 and other biohazard outbreaks and in no way burdens or
2 discourages agriculture in the State of Vermont. (2006)

3
4 Vermont Farm Bureau supports legislation allowing trained
5 technicians, with a veterinarian's approval, to implant embryos in
6 farm animals. (2007)

7
8 Vermont Farm Bureau requests the Vermont Livestock
9 Inspection Division create a written, consistent protocol for
10 portable slaughterhouse businesses, allowing these businesses to
11 operate on farms and produce meat that is saleable within the
12 state. (2003)

13
14 Vermont Farm Bureau urges the Vermont Livestock Care
15 Standards Advisory Council review proposed animal welfare
16 legislation and make recommendations to the Legislature based on
17 the Councils review. (2013)

18
19 Vermont Farm Bureau supports animals being shipped
20 directly from the farm of origin to a slaughter should require no
21 further identification beyond the registration of the farm
22 establishment number and valid bill of lading. (2018)

23
24 **MAPLE**

24

25
26 Vermont Farm Bureau supports full enforcement of existing
27 Vermont maple statutes by the office of Attorney General (2014)
28 and the VAAF. (2016)

29
30 Vermont Farm Bureau believes the Vermont maple industry is
31 adequately regulated to insure the highest standards of quality
32 and protect the public health.

33
34 Vermont Farm Bureau acknowledges the critical importance of
35 Vermont's maple industry to tourism and our economy supports
36 adequate public funding for maple industry research, including the

1 Proctor Maple Research Laboratory.

2
3 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the ongoing development of
4 criteria for the use of public lands in Vermont for maple sap
5 harvesting and urges state agencies to cooperate with the Vermont
6 Maple Industry Council in their development.

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

14
15 **ORGANIC**

25

16
17 Vermont Farm Bureau recognizes the advancement of organic
18 agriculture in the state and urges the Vermont State Legislature to
19 support VAAF, UVM and VTC in research and development of
20 organic production techniques. (2005)

21
22 Vermont Farm Bureau supports keeping organic standards
23 strictly organic and only allow use of approved products to retain a
24 certified organic label. (2013)

25
26 Vermont Farm Bureau supports imported organic labeling be
27 subject to the same standards as U.S. organic labeling. (2013)

28
29 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the Organic Materials Review
30 Institute list of approved materials and USDA's approved list be
31 the same. (2013)

32
33 Vermont Farm Bureau reaffirms the OFPA commitment to soil
34 as the basis for organic certification by the USDA. We request the
35 National Organic Program (NOP) follow the law and not certify
36 hydroponic as organic without a change in the law. (2016)

1
2
3 **PLANNING**

26

4
5 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes government acquisition of
6 agricultural lands for uses such as landfills, septic systems and
7 roads as being contrary to the priority of preserving our rural
8 landscape. We support the adoption of a standard definition of
9 “prime agricultural soils”, incorporating an analysis of such
10 considerations as critical mass, proximity to adjacent farms,
11 economic viability and farm services.

12
13 Vermont Farm Bureau supports local rather than state
14 decision-making regarding recreation paths, scenic corridors and
15 other land use planning issues.

16
17 Vermont Farm Bureau urges its members to serve on local
18 and regional planning and zoning commissions to work on
19 informing and educating these boards on issues of importance to
20 agriculture.

21
22 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a simple appeals process at
23 all levels.

24
25 Vermont Farm Bureau supports continued exemption from
26 local zoning and Act 250 for agricultural improvements. (2006)

27
28 Vermont Farm Bureau believes that reducing sprawl should
29 begin with reform of the following existing laws and regulations:

- 30 1) Vermont land gains tax
31 2) On-site septic regulations
32 3) Property taxes on farmland.

33 4
34 **PROPERTY OWNERS’ RIGHTS**

27

35
36 Vermont Farm Bureau supports protection of private property

1 owners' rights embodied in the Constitutions of the United States
2 and the State of Vermont.

3
4 Vermont Farm Bureau favors the right of landowners to
5 remove gravel from streams to keep them from flooding and
6 eroding and that this channel management tool is considered as
7 one option when a problem is being assessed. (2010)

8
9 Vermont Farm Bureau supports working with the Agency of
10 Transportation and Agency of Natural Resources on a systematic
11 plan to identify where the river channels are located and maintain
12 those channels. (2011)

13
14 Vermont Farm Bureau believes restrictions on the ownership
15 or use of private property by government should be made only in
16 cases of compelling public interest.

17
18 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the right of property owners
19 to utilize their property including providing private hunting
20 opportunities, including fenced hunting areas.

21
22 Vermont Farm Bureau supports legislation at the federal,
23 state and local levels requiring government agencies to prepare
24 private property impact statements for any new laws or regulations
25 impairing the use, value or other ownership rights of private
26 property. (2016)

27
28 Vermont Farm Bureau believes any rule-making committee,
29 governmental agency or legislative body of federal, state and local
30 authority which enforces rules and regulations resulting in
31 reduced value of private property shall reimburse the property
32 owner for lost value and the municipality for lost tax revenue.
33 Such decrease in values shall be determined by the local board of
34 civil authority through the tax appeal process and the entity
35 responsible for the loss shall pay the cost.

1 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes the use of government
2 condemnation powers to seize private property for recreation trails.
3

4 Vermont Farm Bureau believes the right of individual privacy
5 is guaranteed by Article 11 of the Vermont Constitution. Further,
6 we assert certain decisions of the Vermont Supreme Court are not
7 constitutional and, therefore, we urge that legislation be passed to:

8 1) Insure private driveways are not considered part of
9 public highways;

10 2) Require law enforcement to obtain a court-authorized
11 warrant before undertaking surveillance of any kind of
12 private property whether or not the property is posted or
13 enclosed.
14

15 Vermont Farm Bureau believes ownership of abandoned rights
16 of way should revert to abutting landowners. When a new use is
17 proposed in such rights of way, then a new right of way agreement
18 shall be negotiated. When abandoned rights of way are acquired by
19 government after compensation to the abutting landowners, we
20 urge that all maintenance, including fences, be adequately
21 maintained by government. (2006)
22

23 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a law to require agencies of
24 government to notify owners of private property by certified mail 30
25 days before any consideration of any proposed restriction,
26 inclusion of the land in a government inventory, map or plan, or
27 any action affecting the use or value of the property. We urge all
28 agencies of government respect the right of private property owners
29 to review any such proposals and their right to appeal any decision
30 to a higher authority or the courts, and violators of the law receive
31 prompt investigation and adjudication.
32

33 Vermont Farm Bureau supports legislation prohibiting
34 wellhead protection areas being created on anyone's property
35 without their written permission. (2013)
36

1 Vermont Farm Bureau believes there should be appropriate
2 and immediate enforcement of trespassing laws with penalties
3 enabling and compelling law enforcement authorities to assist
4 landowners in protecting property from unwanted trespassers.
5 (2007)

6 Vermont Farm Bureau believes private property is private and
7 governmental officials and the public must obtain permission from
8 property owners before entering private property for any purpose.
9

10 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the right of private property
11 owners to post their land.
12

13 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the USDA view that Nutrient
14 Management Plans are proprietary information not to be released
15 to the public. (2017)
16

17 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the efforts of Vermont
18 Traditions Coalition to make sure management on public lands is
19 supportive of individual property rights and to strengthen a
20 coalition of farming, forestry, hunting and outdoor sporting
21 interests. (2003)
22

23 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the Vermont Legislature
24 adopting a law (as urged by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Kelo v. New*
25 *London*), restricting the use of powers of eminent domain to cases
26 of public necessity. Property taken by eminent domain should be
27 the smallest quantity necessary for the stated use, and should be
28 devoted entirely to public use. Government should never seize
29 property for the purpose of transferring to a second private party.
30 (2010)
31

32 **RECREATION**

28

33
34 Vermont Farm Bureau believes farm and forestlands are first
35 and foremost for farm and forest production. We acknowledge,
36 however, many private property owners voluntarily allow public

1 access to their land for recreation of all kinds and for public rights
2 of way and in return it is fair and reasonable the following
3 conditions apply to such access:

- 4 1) Property owner permission must be obtained;
- 5 2) Information or data gathered with the voluntary
6 participation of the private property owner belongs first to
7 the property owner who gave permission for any other
8 proposed uses of the data;
- 9 3) The recreational use must be compatible with generally
10 accepted farm and forest practices;
- 11 4) Signage and informational materials should be made
12 available to recreational users to encourage respect for
13 private property;
- 14 5) Costs of public recreation should be borne by the public;
- 15 6) Private support to help maintain and improve lands
16 allowing public access should be encouraged.

17
18 Vermont Farm Bureau supports legislation and regulation to
19 preserve and facilitate continued use of public lands including
20 wilderness areas and other specifically designated areas for horse
21 trails, pack and saddle stock animals and other recreational
22 pursuits. (2013)

23 24 **REGULATION**

25
26
27
28
29
30
31
32
33
34
35
36
29

26 Vermont Farm Bureau supports oversight of agriculture by
27 VAAFMM on all issues affecting agriculture. Further, we support
28 exempting agriculture from Act 250 as being fundamentally in the
29 public interest.

30
31 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a change in law with respect
32 to Act 250:

33 Land in which development is proposed to occur that is devoted to
34 agriculture or forest management, any restrictions or conditions
35 placed on the development in order to obtain an Act 250 permit
36 shall apply only to the portion of the property involved in the

1 development, and forestry and agricultural uses can continue
2 without restrictions or encumbrances. (2005)

3
4 Vermont Farm Bureau encourages VAAFMM be flexible when
5 weather conditions prevent farmers from following the Required
6 Agricultural Practices in a timely manner. (2017)

7
8 Vermont Farm Bureau believes manure pits should not be
9 assumed to be leaking unless the assumption is verified by testing.
10 (2011)

11
12 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the use of satellite manure
13 storage (2015). (2016)

14
15 Vermont Farm Bureau believes natural emissions from
16 agriculture should not be regulated under national air quality
17 standards. (2005)

18
19 Vermont Farm Bureau strongly supports 24 VSA; SEC 4413
20 entitled "Limitations on Municipal Bylaws." (2006)

21
22 Vermont Farm Bureau favors the right of landowners having
23 the right to cut their trees in the road right of way without having
24 to get a permit from the town.

25
26 Vermont Farm Bureau supports legislative changes creating a
27 statute of limitations of seven (7) years for state subdivision permit
28 violations where such action was not willful and where there is no
29 threat to the public health and safety.

30
31 Vermont Farm Bureau recommends farm enterprises be
32 exempt from the Labor and Industry Public Building permitting
33 requirements if:

- 34 1) Those enterprises are involved primarily in production,
35 preparation or packaging farm products harvested on the
36 premises.

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

4 Vermont Farm Bureau supports exempting existing gravel pits
5 from Act 250 review.
6

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

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

16 Vermont Farm Bureau supports maintaining the right of
17 farmers to contract for cell towers on conserved land without
18 penalty. (2002)
19

20 Vermont Farm Bureau supports continuing efforts by the
21 VAAFMB working with the Department of Environmental
22 Conservation to streamline the burdensome permitting process for
23 slaughterhouses in Vermont.
24

25 Vermont Farm Bureau supports exempting farms with fewer
26 than 10 employees from OSHA regulations.
27

28 Vermont Farm Bureau supports reciprocity for pesticide
29 applicators if they are certified in a bordering state.
30

31 Vermont Farm Bureau supports reciprocity of a well drilling
32 license between Vermont and neighboring states.
33

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

1 Vermont Farm Bureau urges legislators to consider the
2 competitiveness of primary producers by reducing the costs of
3 doing business in Vermont. Insurance, regulatory fees, and taxes
4 should be analyzed for their impact on businesses which maintain
5 open and undeveloped land in the State of Vermont. (2016) (2017)
6

7 Vermont Farm Bureau supports keeping responsibility for
8 animal cruelty reporting, investigations, and enforcement on
9 working farms in the VAAFMM where there is educated knowledge of
10 accepted animal practices. (2014) (2016)
11

12 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the inclusion of farm stands
13 as agricultural buildings, as defined by the state regardless of the
14 amount of sales or whether the land used for production is
15 contiguous to the stand as long as the stand sells farm products
16 produced by the farmer/farmers. (2015)
17

18 **RIGHT TO FARM AND PRACTICE FORESTRY**

30

19
20 Vermont Farm Bureau supports:

- 21 1) The right of Vermont private property owners to produce
22 and market agricultural products;
- 23 2) A farmer's right to choose agricultural methods,
24 including modern technologies, providing that Required
25 Agricultural Practices (RAP's) and Accepted Management
26 Practices (AMP's) are practiced; (2011)
- 27 3) Actions to ensure farmers are protected from undue
28 liability and nuisance suits when carrying out such
29 practices;
- 30 4) Informing all purchasers of Vermont property of a private
31 property owner's fundamental "right to farm" within
32 "Required Agricultural Practices.";
- 33 5) The VAAFMM establishing a variance process in regards to
34 RAPs regulations. (2013)
35

36 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a right to practice forestry

1 that will relieve landowners from lawsuits for injury from normal
2 forest operations. (2016)

3
4 Vermont Farm Bureau should continue efforts to strengthen
5 the state's right to farm law. (2005)(2015)

6
7 Vermont Farm Bureau supports only the Secretary of
8 Agriculture, not towns or other municipalities, setting the
9 standards for nuisance issues of noise, odor, traffic, flies and other
10 pests on all agricultural operations. (2008)(2015)

11 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the introduction of legislation
12 requiring homebuyers who move next to farms be informed that
13 agriculture can be noisy, odoriferous, dusty – and farmers have a
14 right to farm. Developers and real estate agents should be required
15 to inform potential buyers about Vermont's right to farm whenever
16 property changes hands. (2008)

17
18 Vermont Farm Bureau supports continuation of the Large,
19 Medium and Small Farm Operation laws with an appropriate level
20 of review by the VAAFMM of large livestock operations and the
21 impacts these have on the environment and the community. We will
22 do whatever is necessary to keep all agriculture oversight within the
23 Vermont AAFMM. (2011)

24
25 Vermont Farm Bureau resolves commercial farms encroached
26 on by suburban areas should not be subject to regulation under
27 nuisance or noise laws, and all existing regulatory exemptions for
28 on-going farm operations should be maintained.

29
30 Vermont Farm Bureau will continue to have an active role in
31 protecting the Right To Farm specifically by requesting all water
32 quality laws be based on solid science, not by politically friendly
33 initiatives. (2014)

34
35 Vermont Farm Bureau supports legislation to protect farm
36 animal owners from being held criminally liable for any accident

1 caused by their roaming animals having escaped confinement.
2 (2016) (2017)

3

4 Vermont Farm Bureau will ask the legislature to strengthen
5 Vermont's Right to Farm Law to protect farmers and farmland,
6 whose use has been modified, yet still stays within Vermont's
7 definition of farming. (2016) 10 V.S.A. §6001(22)

8

9 **SOLID WASTE/RESIDUALS**

31

10

11 Vermont Farm Bureau supports common sense approaches to
12 Vermont's solid waste problems coming from locally developed
13 solutions, including marketing of recycled materials and efficient
14 handling of waste collection and transportation. Especially helpful
15 would be simple and clear guidelines for achieving effective waste
16 disposal. We especially support:

17

- 18 1) Allowing farm-generated residuals are composted on the
19 farm to be done without permits under Required
20 Agricultural Practices;
21 2) Permitting of composting with guidelines for accepting
22 compostable waste from off a particular farm;
23 3) Encouragement of businesses assisting farms in disposal
24 of farm residuals. (2013)

25

26 Vermont Farm Bureau requests the VAAFMM return to the
27 position of composting of off-farm food scraps on the farm as a
28 Required Agricultural Practice, as long as the compost is
29 principally used on the farm. (2013)

30

31 **TAXATION - MISCELLANEOUS**

32

32

33 Vermont Farm Bureau favors repeal of inheritance taxes, as
34 they are an unfair second tax on assets working against future
35 generations being able to continue family farm operations. Absent
36 outright repeal, we support increasing the federal exemption.

1 (2012)

2

3 Vermont Farm Bureau supports estate taxes on agricultural
4 and forestland being based on UVA, rather than on fair market
5 value.

6

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

10

11 Vermont Farm Bureau supports simplification of the federal
12 tax code. (2011)

13

14 Vermont Farm Bureau supports increasing the gift tax
15 exemption to \$20,000 per person per year.

16

17 Vermont Farm Bureau strongly supports continuation of the
18 retail sales tax exemption for agricultural items, and we oppose
19 local or state taxes on farm machinery used for custom work.
20 (2016)

21

22 Vermont Farm Bureau requests the Legislature clarify exempt
23 purchases for agricultural uses and any past purchases be
24 grandfathered in, except in the most egregious of cases. (2014)

25

26 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the drafting of legislation that
27 would allow motorized vehicles registered as agricultural vehicles
28 to be exempt from Vermont sales tax. (2005)

29

30 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes the addition of a sales tax to
31 gasoline. (2011)

32

33 Vermont Farm Bureau believes that the State of Vermont
34 should eliminate the state capital gains tax on the first \$10,000 on
35 long-term investment.

36

1 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes the minimum entity tax on
2 partnerships.

3
4 Vermont Farm Bureau believes college expenses should be
5 deductible expenses on individual tax returns.

6
7 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes decoupling the state income
8 tax from the federal income tax.

9
10 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a sales tax exemption for
11 building materials used for agricultural construction and/or
12 renovations. (2012) (2013)

13
14 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes a federal value-added tax.
15 (2009)

16
17 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the rebate of state tax paid on
18 fuel used in vehicles registered with an agricultural plate. (2009)

19
20 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the repeal requiring small
21 businesses issue a 1099 to all vendors and service providers supply
22 more than \$600 of business during a calendar year. (2012)

23
24 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes any proposal for a
25 freestanding carbon tax. A tax based on the carbon content of fuel
26 might be entertained to the extent it replaces all other taxes on
27 fuels, and the proceeds are dedicated to transportation
28 infrastructure in a similar fashion to existing fuel taxes. (2016)(
29 2017) (2018)

30
31 **TAXATION – PROPERTY**

33

32
33 Vermont Farm Bureau supports elimination of the Vermont
34 land gains tax from land sold for agricultural use. (2005)

35
36 Vermont Farm Bureau supports UVA for all land growing farm

1 and forest products. This should be Vermont Tax policy, not a
2 program. (2011) (2015) (2016)

3
4 Vermont Farm Bureau believes farm and forestland should
5 not carry the burden of funding education and residential property
6 should share equally in supporting education.

7
8 Vermont Farm Bureau proposes agricultural structures,
9 including qualified equine structures, be exempt from the property
10 tax. (2017)

11
12 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes capital gains tax policy giving
13 a competitive advantage to Land Trusts and Environmental
14 Groups in the purchase of rural land and other property. (2003)

15 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the Vermont UVA Program
16 and supports the change to have it (Use Value Appraisal) become
17 permanent policy reflecting the goal of keeping those who work the
18 land, on the land. (2009)(2014)

19
20 Vermont Farm Bureau strongly supports Vermont UVA Value
21 Appraisal system and encourages efforts to improve the integrity
22 and public perceptions about this vitally important system of tax
23 equity. We also resolve to encourage better understanding of the
24 vital role agriculture plays in the state's economy and the role
25 programs such as UVA play in agriculture's sustainability. (2014)

26
27 Vermont Farm Bureau continues to urge the legislature to
28 move the state to a system that utilizes UVA valuation as basic,
29 fair and equal tax assessment policy for all Vermont properties,
30 thereby removing the necessity for any tax liability adjustment
31 program and that the Agricultural and Forestland valuation
32 currently using the income approach continue to be set by the
33 UVA Advisory Board. (2015) (2017)

1 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes any substantial adjustments
2 which would have a detrimental effect on participants in the UVA
3 program. (2017)

4
5 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes connecting water quality
6 initiative penalties with the voluntary, contractual UVA program.
7 (2015) (2016)(2017)(2018)

8
9 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the ability of UVA land to be
10 posted like any other. (2015)

11
12 Vermont Farm Bureau supports defining equine farm income
13 to include Vermont diverse equine activities such as boarding
14 horses, therapeutic riding, and lessons. (2016)

15
16 Vermont Farm Bureau supports an ag-use appraisal system
17 for small-scale ag. (2007)

18 Vermont Farm Bureau supports permanent continuation of
19 UVA, at values established by the Current Use Advisory Board.

20
21 Vermont Farm Bureau supports allowing participants of the
22 UVA program to exit with no penalty if the present program is
23 changed in any way, and reducing or removing the penalty on land
24 removed from UVA. We oppose restrictions such as public access
25 without owner permission including the posting of property and
26 urge:

- 27 1) "Potential" and "prospective" be deleted from the
28 definition of appraisal value;
- 29 2) Property assessments should reflect encumbrances and
30 restrictions imposed by law or regulation including
31 easements, Accepted Management Practices, Required
32 Agricultural Practices, EPA regulations and zoning/town
33 plans;
- 34 3) Farm and forestland should be assessed at its ability to
35 produce food and fiber;
- 36 4) Elimination of education taxes on working farm and

1 forest lands; (2002)

2 5) Participants in UVA not be disqualified if their lands are
3 operated for the purposes of fee hunting and fishing. (2003)

4
5 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the concept of land fully
6 conserved by grants of conservation easements should be valued
7 on the Grand List at use value and not included in the UVA
8 Program. (2010)

9
10 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the lien placed against the
11 deed of a UVA Program participant to be considered under law as a
12 binding contract. (2011) (2016)

13
14 Vermont Farm Bureau – in the event land is considered to be
15 developed and withdrawn from the UVA Program by reason of a gift
16 to a relative or employee - supports the Land Use Change Tax
17 (LUCT) shall consist only of the landowner refunding a five-year
18 benefit on the affected deed. (2010)

19 Vermont Farm Bureau supports existing Vermont Farm
20 Bureau policy excluding land (from the UVA program) should not
21 be appraised as a free-standing parcel in violation of honest
22 appraisal. (2016)

23
24 Vermont Farm Bureau supports allowing a landowner in the
25 UVA Program to relocate an undeveloped, withdrawn site of two
26 acres or less, once within an enrolled parcel, without incurring the
27 Land Use Change Tax, provided there is no reduction in the area of
28 enrolled land. (2011)

29
30 Vermont Farm Bureau supports an “easy out” (all out) in any
31 UVA legislation, recognizing the program is a contract between the
32 State of Vermont and the landowner, and changes should never be
33 made unilaterally without the opportunity for parties to withdraw
34 without penalty. (2011)

35
36 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the State of Vermont and its

1 Legislature honoring all contracts in regards to UVA and allowing
2 those who wish to remove enrolled parcels to do so without
3 penalties after the finalization of the new RAPs. (2016)

4
5 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the State setting the penalty
6 for land withdrawal from the UVA Program, not the individual
7 Town Listers. (2011)

8
9 Vermont Farm Bureau supports establishment of an appeal
10 process within the State Department of Forests and Parks in
11 relation to the UVA Program to allow an appeal of an adverse
12 inspection report before disenrollment from the program. (2012)
13 (2013)

14
15 **TRANSPORTATION**

34

16
17 Vermont Farm Bureau asks the appropriate authorities to
18 develop agricultural highway signage warning motorists they are in
19 a farming area and to be on the alert for agricultural
20 activities.(2016)

21
22 Vermont Farm Bureau supports sufficient resources be
23 allocated to maintain a strong transportation infrastructure that
24 will also support the movement of agricultural products in our
25 region. (2007)

26
27 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a waiver from interstate
28 weight limits for trucks with agricultural or forestry products.
29 (2009)

30
31 Vermont Farm Bureau supports authorizing properly
32 configured trucks hauling agricultural or forestry materials to
33 operate at weights up to 97,000 pounds on any interstate highway.
34 We urge the Vermont Congressional Delegation to make the
35 temporary waiver permanent of lower weight limits granted to
36 Vermont for calendar 2010. (2010)

1
2 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a thorough revision of DOT
3 rules affecting truck weights, axle configurations, safety
4 improvements in truck design, and other technical issues,
5 especially to make possible easy interstate and international
6 commerce. (2015)
7

8 Vermont Farm Bureau supports harmonizing Vermont truck
9 weight laws with those of neighboring states and provinces.(2017)
10

11 Vermont Farm Bureau supports making state engineers
12 available to evaluate wooden deck bridges on a case-by-case basis
13 if someone appeals the weight limits and safety. (2017)
14

15 Vermont Farm Bureau would like to impress upon the
16 Vermont Agency of Transportation Vermont farmers and other
17 business using our rail system are at an economic disadvantage to
18 other businesses in neighboring states because Vermont cannot
19 handle rail cars weighing 286,000 pounds, which is considered a
20 national guide thus considerably increasing freight rates to
21 Vermonters (2015)
22

23 Vermont Farm Bureau supports state statutes which provide
24 the right to safe access for all agricultural practices and the right
25 to public access to sell agricultural products (including but not
26 limited to dairy products, produce, maple syrup, horticulture and
27 forestry) across railroad crossings. (2009) (2016) (2017)
28

29 Vermont Farm Bureau supports grandfathering all farming
30 activities involving a railroad crossing as of 1/1/2009. (2008)
31 (2016) (2017)
32

33 Vermont Farm Bureau supports legislation :

34 1)Ensuring the State identifies and inspects for safety at
35 all farm crossings, including the storage of hazardous
36 materials;

- 1 2) Prohibiting the storage of freight cars and tankers
- 2 impairing the visibility at farm crossings;
- 3 3) Ensuring timely information for farmers about train
- 4 schedules at farm crossings;
- 5 4) Supporting farmer education on farm crossing safety;
- 6 5) Requiring the State to review insurance policies held by
- 7 railway companies and to revise the lease requirements
- 8 regarding liability coverage at farm crossings. (2017)

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

16
17 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a mechanism enabling
18 farmers and custom operators to purchase highway diesel fuel tax-
19 free at the point of purchase. (2006)

20
21 Vermont Farm Bureau supports allowing tandem trailers on
22 interstate highways. We also support permitting trucks with
23 agricultural or forest product overweight permits authority to use
24 interstate highways (where feasible) to substantially shorten trips.
25 (2006)

26
27 Vermont Farm Bureau supports increased VTRANS focus on
28 needed repair and maintenance on state highways and bridges.
29 (2015)

30
31 Vermont Farm Bureau recommends interstate highways allow
32 the same weight limits presently allowed on secondary highways.

33
34 Vermont Farm Bureau supports increased VTRANS focus on
35 repair and maintenance of right of way fences along the Interstate
36 system bordering land where animals are actively being pastured,

1 not only for the safety of motorists, but also to fulfill the promise
2 made to landowners when the system was built. (2013)

3
4 Vermont Farm Bureau supports legislation to provide
5 reciprocal agreements, regulations and laws for truck travel
6 between all New England states and New York State.

7
8 Vermont Farm Bureau supports cooperation between town
9 and state highway officials and local farmers to develop reasonable
10 solutions to problems such as left-hand turns by farm machinery.
11 We support educating drivers about slow-moving vehicle signs in
12 driver's manuals and public information campaigns.

13
14 Vermont Farm Bureau supports continued improvement of
15 U.S. Route 2 as the primary east-west corridor through northern
16 New England.

17
18 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a sales tax exemption on
19 trucks registered as agricultural. (2007)

20
21 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the availability of natural gas
22 for cars and trucks.

23
24 Vermont Farm Bureau supports continuation of the weight
25 limit exemption of ag service vehicles (feed, fertilizers and ag
26 trucks). (2005)

27
28 Vermont Farm Bureau encourages a cooperative effort
29 between the farming community and Vermont law enforcement to
30 improve awareness, understanding and voluntary compliance
31 regarding laws regulating flying debris from mobile equipment.
32 (2003)

33
34 Vermont Farm Bureau supports excluding incidents involving
35 farm tractors on drivers' records when the farmer/employee is not
36 at fault. (2003)

1
2 Vermont Farm Bureau believes when a farmer delivers
3 product processed on the farm for retail sale in his own truck, he
4 should not be required to meet CDL or hours of service
5 requirements. (2006)

6
7 **WATER QUALITY/RAPs**

35

8
9 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes the rulemaking of the Clean
10 Water Restoration Act (HR2421) of 2007 providing regulatory
11 authority to the Environmental Protection Agency over all water
12 and requiring the enforcement of Clean Water Act requirements.
13 (2007)

14
15 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes state or federal designation of
16 ground water as a public trust. (2006)

17
18 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the right of private property
19 owners to repair flood damage with prompt permission from NRCS
20 without lengthy permit process and to be able to remove gravel
21 from streams without yard limits in cooperation with the Army
22 Corps of Engineers.

23
24 Vermont Farm Bureau resolves the RAP's should recognize no
25 greater than 25 foot buffer along rivers and streams, and rescind
26 any requirement of more than a 10 foot buffer for any ditch or
27 seasonal watercourse. (2018)

28
29 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes any use of any Citizens Right of
30 Action as a way to enforce water quality. (2018)

31
32 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the development of a plan to
33 allocate funds earmarked for water quality through the Agency of
34 Agriculture and the Agency of Natural Resources. (2018).

35
36 Vermont Farm Bureau supports easing restrictions allowing

1 landowners to keep the water channels and stream banks clear so
2 the 100-year flood stage does not turn from the 100-year flood to a
3 30- or 15-year flood which could cause bridges to become dams,
4 causing homes to become isolated from emergency care and fire
5 protection. (2011)

6
7 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes inclusion of state rivers in the
8 federal Wild and Scenic River program. Further, we urge buffer
9 zones adjacent to major rivers in Vermont not be larger than 25
10 feet, unless an easement is purchased from the landowner so
11 affected. Land set aside in buffer strips should be excluded from
12 property taxation, since its economic use has been excluded.

13
14 Vermont Farm Bureau resolves a 25-foot buffer requirement
15 be maintained and only required on waterways with year-round
16 running water. (2008)

17
18 Vermont Farm Bureau urges Lake Champlain Basin
19 Committee to redirect funding from such efforts as implementing a
20 TMDL analysis and watershed planning. The committee should
21 focus on implementing solutions to known causes of phosphorous
22 runoff, including urban and suburban sources. (2001)

23
24 Vermont Farm Bureau supports further study and review of
25 plans to regulate tile drainage on farms to comply with RAPs.
26 (2017)

27
28 Vermont Farm Bureau supports legislation to fund the
29 Vermont Clean Water Fund by raising all monies in an equitable
30 way with all persons receiving the benefits of clean water to
31 contribute to same. (2017)

32
33 Vermont Farm Bureau supports continued funding for the
34 implementation of BMP's. Vermont Farm Bureau further supports
35 VAAFMs make available matching funds to all types of farming for
36 non-point source water pollution control. Funds should be

1 available for any farm construction of pollution control and
2 containment equipment or structures. (2010)

3
4 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes any attempt to assess fees for
5 water withdrawal for recreational, commercial, municipal or
6 agricultural use. (2001)

7
8 Vermont Farm Bureau supports establishing a committee of
9 qualified agricultural, industrial, and other industry stake holders
10 to guide officials in determining changes to any Federal Water
11 Quality Standards, Laws or Rules. (2014)

12
13 Vermont Farm Bureau opposes connecting water quality
14 initiative penalties with the voluntary, contractual UVA program.
15 (2015)(in taxation- property also)

16
17 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the development of free
18 market contracts for water quality amelioration to allow cooperative
19 solutions agreed to among responsible parties. (2015)

20
21 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the RAPs regarding partial
22 exclusion of livestock from Vermont's Waters of the State, but
23 wants it to go no further toward permanently excluding livestock
24 from the Vermont's Waters of the State. (2016)

25
26 Vermont Farm Bureau will support a per-parcel statewide
27 property tax or fee to support the clean-up of Lake Champlain only
28 if it is deemed equitable and fair to the agricultural community.
29 (2018)

30
31 **WETLANDS**

36

32
33 Vermont Farm Bureau strongly supports the NRCS as the sole
34 agency for agricultural wetland issues and delineations. We
35 support including hay land in the delineation of crops for the

1 purpose of establishing prior converted wetlands. We oppose the
2 NRCS being part of any other national agency than the USDA.

3
4 Vermont Farm Bureau urges the state and federal government
5 to implement a definition based on sound scientific evidence for
6 protected wetlands which does not include artificially-created farm
7 ponds, beaver dams or drainage ditches. We also ask for a
8 clarification of wetlands regulations to ensuring land defined as
9 wetlands is wet, i.e. completely saturated for at least a majority of
10 days in the growing season in a year of average rainfall. Land
11 which is dry for the majority of the growing season in a year of
12 average rainfall should not be classified as wetland.

13
14 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the conversion of
15 insignificant, Class 2 wetlands for agricultural purposes by the
16 granting of general use permits. (2001)

17
18 Vermont Farm Bureau believes private property owners
19 should be fairly compensated when restrictions are placed on
20 private wetlands. (2007)

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

32
33 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the expanded definition of
34 lands used for food or crops to include farm roads, feed or
35 manure-stacking areas, cattle trails, water quality improvements
36 and farm structures. (2018)

3
4 Vermont Farm Bureau believes the designation of the entire
5 Connecticut River Watershed as the Silvio Conte National Refuge
6 has serious implications for farming and forestry. We support
7 efforts to:

- 8 1) Remove farm and forestland from the refuge;
- 9 2) Address the concerns of landowners and private property
10 owners;
- 11 3) Protect agricultural and forestry operations in the
12 watershed from adverse impacts of refuge activities;
- 13 4) Coordinate activities of the Farm Bureaus of Vermont,
14 New Hampshire, Connecticut and Massachusetts to
15 address these concerns;
- 16 5) Restrict the introduction or reintroduction of any plant or
17 animal species onto state- or federal-owned land in the
18 Conte refuge.

19
20 Vermont Farm Bureau recommends moose nuisance and
21 damage legislation providing compensation to the victim,
22 including the option of the moose itself.

23
24 Vermont Farm Bureau recommends 10% of the moose permits
25 be issued to resident applicants of the management unit in which
26 the moose hunt is to be held. We support legislation allowing the
27 legal taking of a moose, turkey, deer or bear which is causing
28 damage to crops, fences, agricultural structures or other valuable
29 property by the property owner or his designee on their property.
30 (2003) and to increase the season length and number of turkeys to
31 be taken each year. (2013)

32
33 Vermont Farm Bureau requests regulation of trapping
34 continue to be overseen by the Vermont Wildlife Advisory Board,
35 and by the wildlife biologists employed by the Department of
36 Wildlife. We oppose expanding the Advisory Board to include

1 members of the public whose only interest is in halting all trapping
2 and hunting. (2017)

3
4 Vermont Farm Bureau urges AFBF oppose the authority of the
5 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to enforce the Endangered Species
6 Act.

7
8 Vermont Farm Bureau supports the right of farmers to protect
9 land and assets on the farm from damage caused by beavers on or
10 off their own land. This is accomplished through directing
11 jurisdiction to the Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department to
12 respond to landowner requests, providing a solution to the
13 problem and resolving landowner disputes. (2002)

14
15 Vermont Farm Bureau supports regular application of
16 lampricide to Vermont streams or rivers feeding Lake Champlain.
17 (2011)

18
19 **WORLD TRADE**

38

20
21 Vermont Farm Bureau supports a level playing field for
22 imports of meat, dairy and other agricultural products, including
23 policy to:

- 24 1) Apply U.S. domestic standards for safety, quality and
25 labeling;
- 26 2) Levy duties to offset foreign subsidies;
- 27 3) Implement country of origin labeling;
- 28 4) Mandate use of ingredient contents in accounting for
29 import quotas for food products;
- 30 5) Apply an assessment on all imported dairy products for
31 dairy promotion equivalent to that paid on domestic
32 products;
- 33 6) Charge \$1.00 per head for beef promotion, including all
34 imported beef to be distributed in the U.S.

35
36 Vermont Farm Bureau resolves the United States should not

1 allow imports of animal products from nations harboring foot and
2 mouth disease or from countries receiving and transshipping such
3 products. (2011)

4
5 Vermont Farm Bureau encourages the development and
6 support of federal and state programs to enhance the ability of
7 private and cooperative businesses in exporting farm products,
8 including value-added products such as dairy. New entrants into
9 the export market should be encouraged, rather than stifled, as
10 under current USDA rules. Specifically, USDA should revoke the
11 rule requiring previous export experience.

12
13 Vermont Farm Bureau requests the United States not allowing
14 dairy products requiring U.S. Grade A sanitary standards to be
15 imported from nations lacking Grade A-inspection of their dairy
16 farms, milk transportation systems and dairy processing plants.
17 (2005)

18
19 Vermont Farm Bureau backs the effort to classify milk protein
20 concentrates (MPC) as a dairy product and have tariffs and
21 promotion fees applied. (2003)

22
23 Vermont Farm Bureau supports agricultural reciprocity with
24 all nations, provided these nations have the same regulations on
25 health and safety of the food. (2010)

26
27 Vermont Farm Bureau urges Congress to include the King
28 Amendment in the next Farm Bill, which would prevent states and
29 local jurisdictions from interfering with the production and
30 distribution of agricultural products in interstate or foreign
31 commerce. (2018)