

2017 Policy Statement



American Farmers & Ranchers is a general farm organization, which has been representing family farmers, ranchers and rural Americans since 1905. It is the oldest and one of the largest general farm and rural organizations in Oklahoma, with over 100,000 members.

With its broadly based farm, ranch, rural and community membership, American Farmers & Ranchers is known as the “Voice of the Family Farmer and Rural America.”

The members themselves make AFR policy. They do this through a system of annual conventions. Local and county organizations send platform recommendations to the state level for the policy committee’s review. The local and county organizations also send delegates to the annual convention to approve the program, which guides the organization’s policies.

This policy directs the legislative action of the organization and represents the diverse and complex interests of the people of rural Oklahoma. AFR represents these issues in a non-partisan manner on a local, state and national level.

1 **AMERICAN FARMERS & RANCHERS**

2 **2017 POLICY POSITIONS**

3 *Adopted February 17, 2017*

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AMERICAN FARMERS & RANCHERS

PREAMBLE

We believe in this nation, under God, and for the great hope for eternal freedom, which it holds for humanity everywhere.

We re-affirm our convictions of the truth and the rightness of the ideals expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States and its Bill of Rights.

We pray our state and national leaders place national security and the preservation of our form of government as their foremost responsibility.

We support prudent policy and programs that will preserve the American system of family farms. Furthermore, we encourage all commodity groups and all farmers and ranchers to cooperate in formulating solutions and promoting sustainability.

Under our economic and political system, the family farm system of agriculture is the most productive and efficient in the world. Since the nation's beginning, family farmers and ranchers have brought forth from the soil new wealth in abundant production of food and fiber and even today agriculture remains the number one industry.

PURPOSE

The American Farmers & Ranchers' mission is to provide effective grassroots leadership for the enhancement and protection of farmers and ranchers, so their rural communities may thrive and prosper. Guided by its educational, cooperative and legislative principles, American Farmers & Ranchers is committed to work for the advancement of the quality of life for its membership and people everywhere.

We are also committed to providing a continuing, safe and stable supply of high quality food and fiber for consumers.

We support the right of farmers and ranchers to engage in modern farming and ranching practices which shall be forever guaranteed in this state. No law shall be enacted which abridges the right of farmers and ranchers to employ agricultural technology, modern livestock production and ranching practices.

American Farmers & Ranchers makes a concerted effort to properly inform consumers, legislative leaders and members of Congress of the problems confronting farmers and ranchers.

American Farmers & Ranchers strives to make aggressive efforts at the national, state and local levels to educate farmers and the general public on the policy and issue positions of other organizations when the position will benefit family farmers, ranchers or our rural communities, and oppose those issues which would negatively impact them.

The role of the family agricultural producer must be that of leadership and stewardship in preserving our natural resources.

The farm and ranch family and its welfare, therefore, is the keystone of our policy. To ensure its continuation, we support a competitive market with fair price discovery.

These families have always been, and remain, the foremost stewards of this land. We have the responsibility to assure that this legacy, with its broad dispersion of land ownership, is passed on to our children and grandchildren.

1 **SPECIAL ORDERS OF BUSINESS**

2
3
4 **ANIMAL WELFARE**

5 We support animal welfare, as opposed to animal rights. We support scientifically sound methods
6 of herdsmanhip and the continued use of technological advancements in livestock production for
7 American meat producers to efficiently supply protein to the world. We oppose any encroachment
8 on traditional animal production practices.

9
10 **PRODUCER-CONSUMER RELATIONS**

11 We support a joint effort among all agriculture groups in Oklahoma to create an environment of
12 transparency between producers and consumers, rural and urban, to maintain confidence in our
13 products and practices.

14
15 **AGRICULTURE FRIENDLY COUNTIES**

16 We support legislation to establish an “Agriculture Friendly” county program to help recruit and
17 develop new and expanded agriculture operations and agribusinesses in Oklahoma.

18
19 **AGRICULTURAL MEDIATION PROGRAM**

20 We support inclusion of guaranteed funding for the Agricultural Mediation Program in the next
21 Farm Bill.

22
23 **COTTON**

24 We urge USDA to designate cottonseed as an “other oilseed” for purposes of the Agriculture
25 Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage programs.

26
27 **EARTHQUAKES**

28 We support research to determine if there are man-made causes contributing to earthquakes.

29
30 We support research for improved methods of energy industry wastewater disposal.

31
32 **DRIVERS LICENSES**

33 We support the passage of legislation to bring Oklahoma drivers licenses into compliance with the
34 federal REAL ID Act.

35
36 **GOVERNMENT FUNDING**

37 We oppose continued disproportionate funding cuts to Oklahoma State University cooperative
38 extension and research which would adversely impact all agriculture producers in the state.

39
40 We support the appropriation of matching funds by the state to the Oklahoma Conservation
41 Commission for flood control rehabilitation.

42
43 We support the USDA Small Watershed Program and further support the State Legislature
44 appropriating the funds necessary to secure the matching provisions in the 2014 Farm Bill.

45
46 **IMMIGRATION**

47 We support comprehensive overhaul of the federal immigration system in order to safeguard
48 the multi-billion dollar American agriculture industry, which currently lacks a stable legal
49 workforce.

1 **POWER**

2 We urge National Farmers Union to work with the National Rural Electric Cooperative
3 Association and other industry stakeholders to influence the EPA Clean Power Plan to allow
4 adequate time to meet new emission standards and fuel source requirements.

5
6 **PRISONS**

7 We urge that state prison facilities be maintained to meet present and future needs, including prison
8 population, with adequate staffing levels and competitive compensation for employees.

9
10 **INTERNET SALES TAX**

11 We support the Oklahoma Legislature attempting to more effectively collect sales tax on internet
12 purchases.

13
14 **USDA STANDARDS**

15 To protect U.S. food safety standards and the availability of domestically-produced agricultural
16 products, we oppose lowering any U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) standard to accommodate
17 any foreign country's food and fiber import products.

18
19 **WATER**

20 We oppose any Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposal now, or in the future, to expand
21 jurisdiction in a federal takeover of all waters in the U.S. All necessary action should be taken to
22 preserve the water rights of the individual citizen and prevent further usurpation of those rights.

23
24 **WILDLIFE**

25 We support the continued authority of Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation officials
26 to enter private lands when appropriate and necessary to carry out their duties under state law.
27

COMMENDATIONS

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We commend the extensive and diplomatic efforts by the state of Oklahoma and the Chickasaw and Choctaw tribes in reaching a historic legal agreement regarding water resources.

We commend the state and federal agricultural agencies for their continuing efforts to support Oklahoma agriculture.

We commend ODAFF for implementing programs and adapting quickly to address environmental challenges facing Oklahoma agriculture producers.

We commend the Oklahoma Conservation Commission for their success at removing polluted streams from the EPA 303(d) list of impaired waters.

We commend the Oklahoma State Firefighters Association for securing a FEMA grant to recruit, train and equip new volunteer firefighters in rural areas.

We commend law enforcement officers and other emergency personnel including military personnel and veterans for their service. We further condemn unprovoked violence against them and support speedy adjudication and appropriate punishment for such acts.

We commend each member, officer, local and county organization who participated in the AFR policy development process which led to the policy document developed and submitted to the membership for consideration and adoption.

COOPERATIVES AND ORGANIZATIONS

We support partnering with only those groups who embrace policies that are favorable to family agriculture and are considered pro-agriculture by the members we represent.

We support bona fide farm cooperatives and urge all farmers to support such in their locals to the fullest extent.

We encourage our members to participate in specialty commodity organizations, with respect to the commodities they grow or produce.

We support continuation of the Capper-Volstead Act of 1922 that limits each member of a cooperative to one vote, regardless of the amount of stock or membership capital the membership owns.

We reaffirm our support for rural electric cooperatives and urge Congress to provide ample insured and guaranteed loan funds to meet the bona fide needs of the rural electric cooperative system and its customers.

We strongly encourage the U.S. Congress to oppose electric deregulation.

The U.S. Congress and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) are steadfastly moving toward restructuring the electric utility industry. We believe Oklahoma decisions are best left to the state and that any restructuring of Oklahoma's electric industry should embrace the following criteria:

1. Make certain we have continued universal access to electric power.
2. Make certain safeguards are in place to protect all Oklahomans from significantly increased rates and line costs from electric restructuring.
3. All classes of customers should be treated fairly.
4. Make certain rural Oklahomans gain the benefits of "competition," while prohibiting the discriminatory aspects of "competition" that left rural Oklahomans in the dark a few decades ago.
5. Make sure revenues generated by the electric industry remain revenue-neutral to all receiving entities as much as possible.
6. Equalize the cost of distributing electric energy statewide, and
7. Make certain the environment is protected and preserved.

We urge the preference clause be continued as a means of assuring the people will benefit from the sale of electric power from the federal dams, not just a few stockholders.

We support the principle that recreation pays a share of the cost of these projects.

We urge Congress, state legislators and ratemaking authorities to use their powers to protect the rights of rural cooperatives to generate their own power where they consider it best to do so.

1
2 We urge Congress to continue to recognize the right of cooperatives to serve defense and
3 other installations in their service areas.

4
5 We oppose any effort, congressional or administrative, to weaken or dispose of our rural
6 electric cooperatives or government-owned power-generating facilities.

7
8 We support legislation to allow water associations and rural water districts to redeem loans
9 before a sale to outside investors.

10
11 We continue our support for the Rural Utilities Service (RUS).

12
13 We support the concept of cooperative wind energy projects that benefit member
14 landowners. Such projects should remain as cooperative ventures once construction is completed
15 without resale to other private entities.

16 17 18 **FAMILY LIFE AND SOCIAL ISSUES**

19
20 We oppose any changes to our national anthem or Pledge of Allegiance.

21
22 We urge active involvement in the effort to preserve the fundamental moral values of our
23 society and uphold the Biblical principles upon which our nation was founded.

24
25 We support the traditional family structure and believe that marriage is comprised of one
26 man and one woman.

27
28 American Farmers & Ranchers does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race,
29 color, religion, national origin, sex/gender, age, disability or veteran status.

30
31 We support all programs promoting Christian life.

32
33 We oppose programs or practices promoting Satanism or witchcraft, and the recognition of
34 such as valid religions.

35
36 We support the groups that are currently fighting to stop the spread of pornography and sales
37 of pornographic materials in our state, along with stronger penalties for violators.

38
39 We strongly oppose television programming, electronic games and Internet sites not suited
40 for full-family viewing.

41
42 We oppose Federal Communication Commission (FCC) rulings that liberalize the use of
43 offensive, explicit or profane language and gestures on network television.

44
45 We support the people's right for quality, free television.

46
47 We believe that determining whether life-sustaining procedures should be withheld or
48 withdrawn for illness, disease, injury or extreme mental deterioration (such that there is no
49 reasonable expectation of recovering or regaining a meaningful quality of life) should be made by
50 the attending physicians and immediate members of the family.

1 We encourage the use of the “Advanced Directive” by everyone.

2
3 We oppose the illegal use of human body parts.

4
5 We recommend the changing of adoption laws to make it easier for U.S. citizens to adopt
6 babies born in the United States.

7
8 We support continuation of the Oklahoma Agricultural Mediation Program (OAMP) and
9 expansion of services to provide stress relief counseling for producers impacted by weather and
10 economic disasters.

11 12 13 **EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS**

14
15 We support public education.

16
17 We strongly support leaving all agricultural education and FFA programs in comprehensive
18 high schools only, not in career and technology centers.

19
20 We strongly oppose the relocation of the Oklahoma Dept. of Career and Technology
21 Education headquarters from Stillwater.

22
23 We support all public education-designated revenue from ad valorem taxation remaining in
24 the public school system and not being used for private school funding.

25
26 We support the continued use of meat in school lunch programs.

27
28 We support adequate school security funding assistance with the help of state or federal
29 levels.

30
31 We support the creation of a representative statewide education task force with stakeholders
32 to include education, farmers, ranchers and other rural constituents to determine options which
33 would direct funding to the classrooms and the students, increase teacher pay, including reforms,
34 and provide a means for paying for such increases or other educational expenditures for the
35 duration of the increase.

36
37 In order to avoid the consolidation of power, we support the continued public election of the
38 Oklahoma State Superintendent.

39
40 We support the state fulfilling their obligations to teachers receiving certification as national
41 board-certified teachers.

42
43 We support making drivers’ training available for all public and private school students.

44
45 We oppose attracting new business and industry with tax incentives which adversely affect
46 funding for education, unless “in lieu of” provisions are available for the impacted area from the
47 business or industry receiving incentives.

48
49 We support one credit hour of general agriculture be included as a high school graduation
50 requirement and a similar requirement in the curriculum at any Oklahoma land grant institution.

1 Driver's license eligibility for minors should be limited to enrolled students, high school
2 graduates or recipients of a GED.

3
4 We favor voluntary Bible reading and prayer in our public schools.

5
6 School children should begin each day with the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag, including
7 the wording "under God."

8
9 We support education of all citizens on the proper care and protocol of the flag of the United
10 States of America.

11
12 Early childhood development should be a parental choice.

13
14 We urge our members to work to eliminate textbooks used in public schools that are anti-
15 American, anti-God and anti-family.

16
17 We support the study of creationism as a portion of the curriculum in public schools.

18
19 We encourage the use of more volunteer workers, such as senior citizens, parents and retired
20 business people, in the local schools.

21
22 We favor school boards and administrators having flexibility in rewarding teachers of
23 excellence and discharging teachers with poor performance records, including those considered as
24 certified staff.

25
26 We ask the Oklahoma Legislature to pass legislation allowing local school districts to vote
27 by super majority an incentive millage of up to five mills for the betterment of education within
28 the school district, and that these monies be non-chargeable against existing or further school aid
29 formulas.

30
31 When local schools are required to provide foreign language, we propose it be state or
32 federally funded.

33
34 We support exercising all influence possible to avoid the use of false or misleading textbooks
35 on animal rights and/or environmental issues.

36
37 We support broad-based representation on the state textbook committee by a diverse group
38 of stakeholders.

39
40 We recognize the need for a closer active relationship between AFR and early childhood
41 agricultural education in Oklahoma. We endorse the Ag In The Classroom project as a way to
42 reach those students. We support building a relationship with Ag In The Classroom and promoting
43 their services throughout our programming across the state.

44
45 We support teaching animal welfare, as opposed to animal rights, through the "Ag in the
46 Classroom" program and other agricultural advocacy training.

47
48 We support educational instruction for children on nutritional values of food and balanced
49 meal selections and further encourage connecting children with where their food is grown.

50

1 The restrictions on daycare centers for preschoolers should not be so rigid that they prevent
2 neighbors and/or relatives cooperatively caring for children or the rights of parents to choose
3 daycare services.

4
5 We support Congress designating English as the official language of the United States and
6 the Oklahoma Legislature designating English as our state language.

7
8 We oppose distribution of contraceptives and abortion referrals in school health programs.

9
10 We believe the choice of AIDS education curriculum and materials should be controlled by
11 local school officials.

12
13 Any mandated programs beyond the basics in the Oklahoma public schools should be fully
14 funded by the Oklahoma Legislature.

15
16 Rural areas of school districts should be adequately represented on all boards of education.

17
18 The State of Oklahoma must continue to expand its educational assistance to farmers who
19 are in financial difficulty and/or trying to establish a new career.

20
21 We support the Oklahoma Agricultural Leadership Program (OALP) and annual line-item
22 funding by the Oklahoma Legislature which is combined with private sector funding.

23
24 We respectfully request that the Oklahoma Legislature move very cautiously in funding,
25 making sure that all funding is “fair” to rural, as well as urban school districts.

26
27 We oppose consolidation of schools, forced or otherwise, dependent and independent, by
28 whatever means to meet arbitrary standards. Any assessments relative to consolidation should be
29 an equitable comparison of all relevant factors. We support voluntary consolidation and/or
30 innovative classroom approaches, providing incentives for such consolidations come from new
31 money.

32
33 We oppose consolidation of schools solely based on student enrollment.

34
35 We oppose mandated consolidation of administration.

36
37 We support patrons’ right to vote to annex or consolidate with another school district
38 voluntarily.

39
40 We support cooperative initiatives by small schools to improve efficiencies.

41
42 Small rural schools should be provided telecommunication service and cooperative programs
43 developed to provide a curriculum that meets the requirements for high school graduation and
44 college entrance.

45
46 We suggest our county organizations and/or members consider assisting local school districts
47 in purchasing distance learning equipment.

48
49 We support state-approved core curriculum in all private schools.

50

1 We support allowing schools to be given credit for average daily attendance of students
2 participating in virtual learning. However, we support the number of credits counting towards
3 graduation requirements from online instruction be totally at the discretion of the local school
4 board. We recognize the value of online learning for schools which may not be able to provide
5 certain advanced subjects.

6
7 We oppose tax credits and/or vouchers for transfer between public and/or private schools.
8

9 We support the Oklahoma career and technical education system as one of the best in this
10 nation for training, re-training and future employment of our youth and adults.
11

12 We support additional recruitment efforts to maintain an available pool of agriculture
13 education instructors to meet the demand resulting from anticipated retirements in future years.
14

15 We support the work of, and adequate funding for, the 4-H, FFA, FCCLA and AFR youth
16 programs. We will, therefore, actively oppose any attempt to curtail the activities of these
17 deserving groups.
18

19 We encourage including, as an academic requirement, entrepreneurial training for high
20 school students, such as the skills training demonstrated in agriculture education/FFA and career
21 and technical education programs and 4-H Clubs.
22

23 We oppose discrimination against career and technical education toward meeting
24 requirements of high school graduation and college entrance.
25

26 We strongly encourage a minimum of two appointees made by the Governor to the Oklahoma
27 Career and Technology Education Board have an agricultural background and/or career and
28 technical education programs background.
29

30 We support the Oklahoma Legislature fully funding mandated increases in teachers' salaries
31 or other educational expenditures for the duration of the increase.
32

33 We support adequate funding for research and development through land grant colleges and
34 universities.
35

36 We support following the constitutional requirement and state statute that a majority of the
37 members appointed by the Governor to the Board of Regents for the Oklahoma Agricultural and
38 Mechanical Colleges shall be farmers who are actually engaged in farming and/or livestock
39 growing as their principal business or occupation in earning a livelihood.
40

41 We oppose any new legislative or State Department of Education mandates without full
42 funding for such mandates.
43

44 **CRIME**

45
46
47 We support the victim's rights to be strongly protected by law at the local, state or federal
48 level.
49

50 We favor expediting the appeal process of convicted criminals.
51

1 We recommend severe penalties and strict enforcement of laws governing all drivers,
2 including juveniles under the influence of alcohol and drugs. We also recommend mandatory
3 incarceration of transporters of illegal drugs, pending trial.

4
5 We support changes in the juvenile justice system to provide adequate juvenile detention
6 facilities with adequate counseling and rehabilitation programs.

7
8 We support peaceful communities and the right to peacefully assemble. Those that breach
9 legal standards should be appropriately punished.

10
11 We call for greater emphasis on controlling alcohol and drug use.

12
13 School officials and law enforcement officers in schools must be given adequate latitude to
14 address disciplinary problems in schools.

15
16 We encourage random drug testing of anyone responsible for the safety of others and support
17 the crack-down on any abusive use of drugs, illegal or prescription.

18
19 We encourage adequate funds be appropriated for the treatment and incarceration of drug
20 users.

21
22 Convicted narcotic dealers should be given maximum sentences with a “no parole” provision
23 being added to the law.

24
25 We support the county’s option to regulate the sale of liquor.

26
27 We support the Amber and Silver Alert System.

28
29 We support the establishment of a rural crime unit. We prefer that such a unit be under the
30 jurisdiction of the Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) in cooperation with the
31 Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF) where applicable.

32
33 We oppose attempts to consolidate civilian surveillance and intelligence, such as the OSBI
34 and the FBI, under military control.

35
36 We support the action of local, state and federal departments and agencies to combat
37 terrorism, including any agrarian-related terrorism attack.

38
39 Due to the threat posed by terrorists to the security and welfare of the United States, we
40 support the actions taken through the Dept. of Homeland Security to require foreign students in
41 the U.S. on student visas to show proof of enrollment and academic participation.

42
43 We support increasing penalties for acts of agricultural terrorism.

44
45 We urge support for local, state and federal law enforcement agencies.

46
47 We support additional efforts to protect our federal borders from the growing and/or import
48 of illegal drugs and potential terrorist activity.

49
50 We support the use of trained dogs for drug detection.

51

1 We recommend that current laws be rewritten and strengthened concerning child abuse and
2 sexual crimes against children so that children will be better protected. We favor providing law
3 enforcement agencies with the resources needed to apprehend, prosecute and monitor sex
4 offenders.

5
6 Parents and minors should be held legally and financially responsible for all costs and
7 damages incurred by a minor's criminal activities.

8
9 We urge our members to join and/or organize their communities into neighborhood watch-
10 type programs and cooperate with local law enforcement agencies for identification of all personal
11 property.

12
13 After an accident involving property damage to fences, buildings or equipment, the
14 investigating law enforcement officer(s) should be required to notify landowners or tenants of such
15 damage immediately after it occurs.

16
17 The DOC should pay the county jails of Oklahoma at a rate commensurate with state
18 incarceration costs for state offenders after judicial sentences are imposed.

19
20 We recommend uniform and prompt sentencing for the same type of offenses and mandatory
21 minimum sentences be provided by law for repeat offenders.

22
23 Hardened criminals should be segregated from first time offenders and efforts should be
24 made to rehabilitate first time offenders.

25
26 We support legislation that would limit early release of prison inmates to those convicted of
27 non-violent crimes only.

28
29 We favor work programs whereby inmate labor would be used to maintain and improve
30 public facilities, such as roads, bridges, parks, buildings and other such public property.

31
32 More consideration should be given to restitution, rather than confinement, when the risk to
33 the public is minimal.

34
35 We encourage use of electronic monitoring, rather than incarceration, for non-violent
36 offenders.

37
38 More emphasis should be placed on the supervision of parolees.

39
40 A jail meeting standards when built should not be in violation when new regulations or
41 standards are issued, unless the total cost of updating is provided by the state or federal
42 government.

43
44 To help alleviate the ever-increasing tax burden on rural residents, we support a concept of
45 regional, centrally-located jails, funded by the state, to serve multiple cities, towns and counties,
46 but only when these entities and the voters wish to participate jointly.

47
48 We support adequate funding for multiple-county rural crime task forces.

49
50 We support action to prevent or minimize frivolous lawsuits.

51

1 We oppose firearms registration or any other invasion or limitation of our Second
2 Amendment rights.

3
4 We support protecting one's self and family with necessary force, particularly when a
5 perpetrator intrudes upon their property.

6
7 We favor a rehabilitation center for minor juvenile offenders and an alternative school
8 environment for repeat offenders who constantly disrupt the classroom and cause problems.

9
10 We support coordination of local, state and federal governments in prosecution of crimes
11 committed with electronic media.

12
13 We support adequate funding for ODAFF for investigating theft of livestock and other
14 agriculture commodities, products, and increased penalties for perpetrators.

15 16 17 **SAFETY**

18
19 We encourage additional annual funding allocations for volunteer fire departments to build
20 adequate local firefighting capacity. We oppose insurance companies/agents being the source point
21 of collections for fire department assessments.

22
23 We support county officials' authority to declare a burn ban during times of high fire risks
24 and support the enforcement thereof.

25
26 We support public funding and installation of dry fire hydrants.

27
28 We encourage the voluntary effort of producers to put reflective tape and slow moving
29 vehicles symbols on farm tractors and equipment.

30
31 We support education and training efforts related to farm operations, grain storage, and all-
32 terrain vehicle (ATV) safety.

33
34 We support a statewide coordinated communications network system and an enhanced 9-1-
35 1 system which would improve the efficiency of ambulance and emergency medical services in
36 rural areas.

37
38 We urge the state not to over-regulate rural fire departments.

39 40 41 **SOCIAL SECURITY AND SENIORS**

42
43 We support a strong Social Security system.

44 We oppose any negative net adjustments of the current Social Security system and support
45 adequate continued federal funding of the Social Security program.

46
47 We support the federal government investing Social Security funds in U.S. Treasury bills.

48
49 The spouse or family of a deceased person should be able to keep the month's social security
50 check in the month that the individual became deceased.

1 We believe only U.S. citizens should be eligible to receive Social Security benefits, but non-
2 citizens lawfully working with a visa or work permit should be required to pay into the Social
3 Security system.

4
5 We oppose any cuts in Social Security benefits and furthermore urge an increase of the death
6 benefit to the beneficiary.

7
8 We support the Older Americans Act. We commend the efforts of senior service programs,
9 which serve senior citizens in Oklahoma, and further, we urge funding these programs,
10 continuance and expansion into all counties in our state.

11 **HEALTH CARE**

12
13
14
15 We support continuation of an Oklahoma State University (OSU) teaching hospital and
16 associated osteopathic doctor training which primarily returns physicians to rural Oklahoma.

17
18 We support providing a wide range of services to our veterans, including adequate health
19 care in a timely manner, with close scrutiny and continued oversight of U.S. Dept. of Veterans
20 Affairs (VA) programs by the federal government.

21
22 We support veterans receiving healthcare at their local hospital if the care they need exists
23 in that location.

24
25 We support health care reform that does not disproportionately burden small, family-owned
26 farms and businesses with additional costs.

27
28 We support health care reform to cover all Americans with affordable and available basic
29 health-care coverage.

30
31 We support affordable prescription drugs for senior citizens.

32
33 We encourage the federal government to simplify the information on and enrollment of
34 Medicare Part D and provide more affordable coverage without gaps.

35
36 We support the right to enroll in Medicare Part D at any given time after the age of 65 without
37 penalty.

38
39 We oppose funding reductions to Medicare, but support a process for establishing a means
40 test for program eligibility.

41
42 We support expanding qualifications to allow more people eligibility for the medical savings
43 plan, including employees with no health plan benefits.

44
45 We encourage the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to continue their efforts to
46 expand the education and training provided by regional hospitals to encompass the entire state and
47 provide care at low cost to indigent patients as well as to train interns in rural areas.

48
49 We support providing equal pay for equal services claims reimbursement, whether in a city
50 or rural health care facility.

1 We oppose changes in regulations which would impose unrealistic demands on rural
2 hospitals and rural physicians, threatening survival of small hospitals and discouraging physicians
3 from establishing or maintaining rural practices.
4

5 We support funding of rural medical scholarship programs that encourages young doctors to
6 practice in rural areas upon completion of their training.
7

8 Training for emergency medical technicians should be fostered in regional areas utilizing
9 local volunteer fire departments, hospitals, Oklahoma Career and Technology Education centers
10 and other entities utilizing grant funds to accomplish the effort.
11

12 We support legislation to allow 100 percent federal and state income tax credits or tax
13 deductions for those who self-finance their health insurance and are self-employed.
14

15 **TRANSPORTATION**

16 We favor the close monitoring of the proposed border-to-border superhighway projects.
17

18 We support the reauthorization of the federal highway fund and oppose such funding being
19 redirected to other non-roads and non-bridges projects.
20

21 County roads and bridges should maintain a high funding priority by the Oklahoma
22 Legislature.
23

24 All motor vehicle excise tax should be earmarked for county roads, state highways and city
25 streets, rather than going into the general revenue fund.
26

27 We oppose the use of state funds and federal gas tax monies in promoting and assisting in
28 the construction or maintenance of toll roads.
29

30 The Oklahoma Dept. of Transportation (ODOT) should pay for repairing county roads used
31 for detours when building or repairing state highways.
32

33 Access roads around lakes that have been built by the state should be maintained by the state
34 and not by the counties.
35

36 We support new bridges being built on the original right-of-way and not off-set.
37

38 We support ODOT being responsible for maintaining their fences along limited access
39 highways.
40

41 We encourage the Oklahoma Department of Transportation to work with property owners to
42 find common sense solutions when disputes arise over highway signage regulations.
43

44 We favor a law requiring all road intersections to be cleared of weeds and brush to eliminate
45 blind corners and thus prevent accidents.
46

47 The Oklahoma Legislature and Governor should do everything possible to maintain railroad
48 services and all existing transportation facilities in all of Oklahoma.
49
50

1 We support legislation that would provide for adequate rail competition and oppose rate
2 increases by railroads for agricultural products.

3
4 We support full-contract rate disclosure, including all pertinent contract provisions.

5
6 We support the state assisting in railroad right-of-way purchases and maintenance for rail
7 services and the enhancement, expansion and continuation of short-lines for the continued viability
8 of the state economy.

9
10 We oppose state or federal regulation regarding the transportation of hazardous materials by
11 farmers who do so in the course of their own farming operation.

12
13 We support an agriculture exemption from federal and state regulations regarding displaying
14 of Dept. of Transportation (DOT) numbers.

15
16 We support the Oklahoma Highway Patrol (OHP) in their efforts to educate farmers and
17 ranchers on current Federal Commercial Motor Carrier Safety Administration requirements.

18
19 We support reinstating Oklahoma residents being allowed to renew their commercial driver's
20 licenses (CDL) at tag agencies.

21
22 We support variances for natural disasters in "hours of service" regulations for drivers with
23 CDLs with respect to restoring emergency services.

24
25 In order to continue receiving federal transportation funds, permits for hauling loads of hay
26 should be free and easily obtainable, since the federal government requires the State of Oklahoma
27 to issue such permits for use on federal roads.

28
29 We oppose federal requirements to install lighting on farm equipment that was not originally
30 equipped with such devices.

31
32 We encourage designating one central agency for issuing permits and enforcement of truck
33 weights and measures.

34
35 We support reasonable reform of federal and state transportation laws regarding increasing
36 weights and measures when transporting farm commodities and equipment.

37
38
39 **CREDIT AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS**

40
41 We recognize and support the value of community banks and lending institutions to rural
42 areas and realize that the broad-based economic stress of the Nation has impacted these entities.
43 We trust that they will not be ignored for future assistance when they are negatively impacted.

44
45 We strongly oppose legislation which negatively impacts rural America banks and lending
46 institutions.

47
48 We oppose the Basel III proposal which fundamentally changes how all banks' holding
49 companies calculate their capital ratios which impacts loan volume.

1 Assistance to rural banks can be provided by allowing Federal Deposit Insurance
2 Corporation (FDIC) tolerance in working with local bankers.

3
4 We oppose further relaxation of the branch banking laws.

5
6 We oppose the continuing increase of regulations on home mortgages lending and support
7 relaxation of regulations relative to community lending for home mortgages.

8
9 We oppose further closure and/or consolidation of existing Oklahoma Farm Service Agency
10 (FSA) county offices, support adequate staffing commensurate with work load levels evaluated
11 annually, and support updated technology for expediting delivery of programs.

12
13 We oppose recall of short-term FSA farm loans until termination date.

14
15 We support a two year extension on the 15-year limit on FSA loans until the issue can be
16 reconsidered.

17
18 FSA should be more adequately funded for emergency farm ownership and operating loans.

19
20 All FSA applications and credit for farming activities should be fairly and equitably
21 considered and acted upon in a timely manner to maintain the integrity of the program.

22
23 We oppose the privatization of FSA loan programs.

24
25 We support continuation of the limited resource loan program through FSA and oppose loan
26 time limits as the only disqualifying factor.

27
28 FSA should accomplish its original mission with emphasis on agriculture loans and provide
29 adequate funds for both guaranteed and direct loans return to the direct loan concept.

30
31 We support lower interest rates on agriculture loans from FSA including but not limited to
32 socially disadvantaged and veteran programs.

33
34 We support FSA regulations, which would give delinquent FSA borrowers additional time
35 to complete the loan servicing documents.

36
37 We support the amount of write downs on FSA loans to not be below current fair market
38 value and to be determined by a minimum of three certified land appraisers using the comparative
39 sales approach.

40
41 We strongly support jurisdiction of the Farm Credit System (FCS) remain under the authority
42 of the U.S. House and Senate Agriculture Committees.

43
44 We support legislation to close the exit provision of the FCS that would allow the sale,
45 acquisition or merger to any private entity that is not a cooperative.

46
47 We support the FCS in providing long-term, low-interest-rate loans in a timely fashion to
48 young people who want to start farming.

49
50 We support the continued cooperative ownership of the FCS and its status as a government
51 sponsored enterprise. We support maintaining the Farm Credit Administration (FCA) as the FCS's

1 independent regulator and the agency’s focus on FCS safety and soundness and mission
2 fulfillment.

3
4 The Federal Agricultural Mortgage Corporation (Farmer MAC) could be a new source of
5 long-term, fixed-rate credit for family farmers if properly administered. We urge Congress to
6 review the effects of Farmer MAC on the availability of credit to borrowers whose loans would
7 not qualify to be pooled or who would choose not to have their loan pooled.

8
9 We urge continuance of the program authorizing matching grants to states with qualified
10 mediation programs.

11
12 We favor continuing the Agricultural Link Deposit Program as administered by the
13 Oklahoma State Treasurer. The program should be limited to family farmers, as defined herein,
14 and on the ability to repay. The program should be expanded by providing additional funds for
15 lending.

16
17 We encourage Oklahoma Bankers Association members to get involved with farm
18 organizations on issues related to the farm bill.

19
20
21 **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

22
23 We support state legislation that enhances economic development in rural Oklahoma. We
24 urge local and county AFR/Oklahoma Farmers Union organizations to cooperatively work with
25 city, county and state agencies to take advantage of economic development opportunities.

26
27 We support the continued funding of the Rural Economic Action Plan (REAP) program that
28 provides the infusion of capital to assist small towns, rural communities and rural water districts.

29
30 We support the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry’s (ODAFF) Made in
31 Oklahoma program.

32
33 We also support any effort to expand, enhance or assist the “added value” industry in
34 Oklahoma, including tax incentives for investors in value added agricultural incentives, and that
35 they be transferable and minimize negative impacts to education.

36
37 We encourage increased funding for the Oklahoma Agriculture Enhancement and
38 Diversification Program.

39
40 We encourage legislation that would establish a state program for investing and/or financing
41 rural business growth within the state.

42
43 We support American Farmers & Ranchers’ continuing to pursue agricultural value-added
44 venture opportunities for our membership.

45
46 We support efforts to promote agritourism opportunities for rural Oklahomans as another
47 means of complimenting their existing agricultural enterprises.

1
2 **FOOD PROCESSING**
3

4 We support interstate or intrastate shipment of beverages or processed foods if the state
5 inspections meet or exceed federal standards.
6

7 We support increasing the funding commensurate with the increased number of inspectors
8 needed to adequately inspect intrastate, interstate and international food.
9

10 We support Oklahoma State University's continued efforts to secure federal grants and
11 encourage the Oklahoma Legislature to appropriate the necessary funding for operation of the
12 Oklahoma State University (OSU) Food and Agricultural Products Research and Technology
13 Center (FAPC).
14

15 We support irradiation as a means of purifying food products.
16
17

18 **LABOR**
19

20 We support cities or towns of less than 25,000 population, and counties less than 60,000, be
21 exempted from provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act. This act provides that prevailing wages be paid
22 on any construction job where public money is involved.
23

24 We support a common sense approach to child labor regulations and laws relative to
25 agriculture.
26
27

28 **COMMUNICATIONS**
29

30 We support agriculture advocacy initiatives and communication efforts to promote
31 agriculture to the non-agriculture audience and to educate uninformed consumers.
32

33 We support federally funded access to broadband communication in rural areas.
34

35 We strongly support legislative efforts to secure access to programming at non-
36 discriminatory rates for home satellite dish owners in rural America. The Federal Communications
37 Commission (FCC) should give consideration to rural residents to obtain local channels by dish
38 when the mailing address conflicts with regulations which prevent them from receiving the nearest
39 local channel.
40

41 We support preservation of satellite-based augmentation system (SBAS) guidance
42 opportunities for agriculture and protection of investments made by producers in existing
43 technologies.
44

45 We support an agricultural exemption from FCC registration requirements.
46

47 We support the enforcement of the telephone solicitors no call list.
48
49
50
51

INSURANCE

A. GENERAL

Market conditions and competitive pricing will lead to innovation in developing solutions to problems relating to multi-peril crop insurance and mitigation. Competitive pricing and risk-based underwriting are essential to developing and maintaining a viable disaster insurance market and should be originated and enforced at the state level.

Insurance legal liability minimum limits should be enforced and motor vehicle registration and tags pulled if they are not in compliance.

We support the removal of the drop-down liability clause on AFR auto policies.

We encourage all drivers to take a safe driving course in order to receive additional insurance policy discounts.

We support delivery of insurance services by full-time, stand-alone professionals.

We oppose mandatory workers' compensation being extended to family-size production agricultural operations and small businesses.

We favor farmers being exempt from personal liability when using contractors and contract labor.

We oppose frivolous lawsuits. If the court finds in favor of an insured defendant, we believe the plaintiff and/or their lawyer(s) should be made responsible for defendant's costs.

We support legislation to strengthen and amend the current tort reform law. Injured parties should be compensated only for the actual loss incurred, plus expenses of recovery.

Reasonable limits of liability exposure should be placed on corporate boards of directors for actions of the corporation made without their prior knowledge or consent.

Reasonable limits of liability exposure should be placed on state, county and municipal government.

We favor justifiable evidence of merit being presented to the court before filing a product or malpractice liability lawsuit.

We favor the establishment of certain statutes of limitations pertaining to liability lawsuits, not to exceed five years.

We favor legislation limiting liability of any individual to the extent of their contributory negligence.

The AFR Mutual Insurance Company was originally established (Oklahoma Farmers Union) to serve its rural membership. We urge that, when decisions must be made regarding reduction of insurance services, preference be given to rural, over metropolitan, insureds.

1 We do not discourage the use of the windmill by local/county organizations and AFR
2 insurance agents in promotional efforts.

3
4 We support limits on liability for permitted agritourism activities.

5
6 We support the National Fire Protection Association Firewise Communities Program and
7 associated educational initiatives to property owners. We encourage the participation of AFRMIC
8 agents in the program which will result in reduced risks for company insureds.

9
10
11 **B. CROP INSURANCE/RISK MANAGEMENT**

12
13 We support development of federal crop insurance policies providing dollar-per-acre multi-
14 peril option similar to policies that exist for single-peril type coverage such as hail.

15
16 Multi-peril federal crop insurance programs should apply to all crops in all counties. The
17 program should include optional coverage plans, one of which would be at least the cost of
18 production.

19
20 Farmers should not be penalized on their crop insurance average yield as a result of natural
21 disasters.

22
23 We encourage increased premium assistance for producers who purchase higher levels of
24 coverage.

25
26 We support private vendors handling federal crop insurance.

27
28 We oppose mandatory federal crop insurance as a requirement for participating in price
29 support programs.

30
31 We oppose any new restrictions on crop insurance related to livestock grazing.

32
33 We oppose any new insurance restrictions on broadcast wheat.

34
35 We encourage risk management training.

36
37 We encourage a review of current risk management regulations to complement each farm
38 bill.

39
40 We support crop insurance premium payments being due after average harvest dates.

41
42 We support the continued availability of the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program
43 (NAP) for dual-purpose crop and grazing winter crops.

44
45
46 **PROPERTY RIGHTS**

47
48 Biological surveys, including the cataloging of plant and animal species, and water samples
49 should not be conducted on private property without prior written consent from the landowner.

1 Micro-management of watersheds and streams and new user fees that the U.S. Fish and
2 Wildlife Service (FWS) is implementing should not infringe on a producer's ability to build ponds
3 and till soils, nor impact technical assistance to these producers by the Natural Resources
4 Conservation Service (NRCS).

5
6 The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should be restricted from writing arbitrary policies and
7 regulations that interfere with the private rights of citizens.

8
9 We are opposed to municipalities imposing land-use restrictions outside city limits.

10
11 We are opposed to the state and federal government owning, regulating or controlling
12 billboards.

13
14 Land acquired by condemnation under the eminent domain statutes should have a settlement
15 value of not less than 100 percent of replacement costs for like property plus intangible damages.
16 We support mediation in eminent domain proceedings.

17
18 All necessary action should be taken to:

- 19
20 1. Preserve the water rights of the individual citizen and prevent further usurpation of
21 those rights,
22
23 2. To see that legislation is initiated and supported recognizing the rights of individuals,
24 from which water has been taken, and
25
26 3. Reaffirm, renew and defend the concepts that water rights are property rights, and these
27 established rights to the use of water by an individual should not be taken away without
28 the due process of law and adequate compensation.
29

30 We oppose the use of eminent domain to acquire land believed to be the habitat of
31 endangered species. We oppose the acquisition of large tracts being acquired by private funds for
32 the purpose of donating or selling it to a government agency at a profit.

33
34 We support governmental financial compensation for protection of endangered habitats on
35 private land.

36
37 The threatened species designation and critical habitat determined by U.S. Dept. of the
38 Interior agencies (i.e. USFWS) for certain species could infringe upon the property rights of
39 agricultural producers and other landowners. The impacting agency must produce proven scientific
40 data indicating need, an economic impact statement and a benefit to cost ratio for the action being
41 taken before a designation determination becomes final.

42
43 All impacted public and private entities and individuals shall be compensated from the
44 budget of the impacting agency for actual annual losses as a result of the designation. Payments
45 shall be annualized immediately or prior to the loss.

46
47 We favor legislation that limits broad condemnation authority and in particular for private
48 business purposes.

49
50 We oppose the use of eminent domain for the acquisition of lands for parks and recreation,
51 and non-public utilities that are non-cooperatives.

1 We oppose federal legislation that would enable the federal government to acquire land
2 outside the normal congressional appropriations process for use as outdoor recreation and
3 historical preservation. Congress should maintain control and oversight of such programs in the
4 interest of all citizens.

5
6 We urge clarification of federal and state statutes that would allow all railroad rights-of-way
7 resulting from reversionary easements to revert back to the present property owner if abandoned.
8 If the rights-of-way were purchased and then abandoned, the first right to purchase the property
9 should be offered to the current owner of the tract of land from which it was originally separated.

10
11 We support adequate funding for an agricultural land trust or foundation for the preservation
12 of agriculture land use.

13
14 We support further education of property owners in setting terms relative to compensation
15 of easements or leases of surface or subsurface property rights. We further support development
16 of model leases relative to the activity.

17
18 We encourage the development of model contractual instruments which allow landowners
19 to receive annual payments for compensation of damages and royalties relative to continued
20 generation and/or transmission of energy instead of or addition to a one-time easement payment.

21
22 We support the right of surface owners to influence what occurs on their property, including
23 the use of third party mediation, when necessary.

24
25 We support Oklahoma being a title insurance state without requiring abstracts.

26
27 When change in land use is proposed, the planning body should be required to notify, by
28 recognized notification procedures, the owners of adjacent land.

29
30 Trespass laws should be strengthened and enforced with more extensive fines and penalties
31 for repeat offenders and restitution for property damage should be pursued.

32
33 Farmers and members of their immediate families (whether residing at home or not) should
34 be permitted to fish in ponds on their own lands and to hunt on those lands during regularly posted
35 hunting seasons, without licenses subject to special requirements.

36
37 We oppose any act which mandatorily restricts grazing of livestock in pastures where
38 running streams are located. We oppose requiring mandatory fencing of rivers, streams and ponds.

39
40 We support owners of private property not being responsible or liable for any accident or
41 injury sustained by persons entering property without permission.

42
43 We support just compensation to farmers and ranchers who suffer economic losses as a result
44 of any state or federal agency ruling.

45 We support a landowner's right to keep and maintain a private, non-commercial dumpsite
46 for disposal of non-toxic materials.

47
48 We support a landowner's right to store equipment and vehicles on property used for
49 agricultural purposes without restriction.

50

1 We support a landowner's right to burn refuse on their land when located in rural areas in
2 compliance with state and county regulations.

3
4 We support the development of reasonable regulations for the use of unmanned aerial
5 vehicles, while respecting and protecting the property and privacy rights of landowners.

6
7 We support reimbursement of legal costs incurred by an agricultural producer or agribusiness
8 if they are a defendant in litigation involving their agriculture or agribusiness operation, if the
9 litigation is found to be frivolous or a nuisance action.

10
11 We support the ability for family agriculture to voluntarily contract with integrators in order
12 to maintain their family farm operation.

13 14 15 **FORECLOSED LAND AND WETLANDS**

16
17 We oppose arrangements between U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the Farm
18 Service Agency (FSA) which allow control of foreclosed lands in FSA inventory to be transferred
19 without public hearings or impact studies.

20
21 We oppose acquisition of land for hiking trails and habitat for endangered species through
22 the use of easements or other restrictions placed on deeds of foreclosed land.

23
24 We support legislative action requiring federal land for sale with no more restrictions on the
25 deeds than existed at time of foreclosure. Mineral rights on such foreclosed lands should be left
26 intact and transferred to the new owner.

27
28 We support development of a clear, common definition of wetlands to be used consistently
29 by all state and federal agencies. The landowner must be notified prior to the classification or re-
30 classification of his or her property. The owner of property taken as wetlands should be fairly and
31 reasonably compensated for any loss of use. While we oppose the taking of ANY land by
32 governmental agencies, no takings should occur without a sight inspection of the property and full
33 opportunity for the owner to appeal agency decision.

34
35 We propose that the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) be the lead agency in matters
36 pertaining to wetlands.

37 38 39 **ENERGY**

40
41 We encourage greater emphasis on research and development and increased government
42 support to reduce U.S. dependency on foreign oil.

43
44 We encourage universities and state and federal agencies to cooperate and investigate
45 alternative processes to produce more conservation-reliable alternatives, including biofuels,
46 ethanol, biomass, fuel cells, wind and solar power, heat transfer and other sustainable energy
47 sources.

48
49 We support continuation for 640 acres or less unit spacing for an individual vertical or
50 horizontal oil or gas well in Oklahoma.

1 We support the continuation of hydraulic fracturing (fracking) as a means of extraction of
2 energy resources.

3
4 We urge further development in the use of compressed natural gas (CNG), ethanol blended
5 gasoline, bio-diesel and propane as alternate motor fuels.

6
7 We support the use of nuclear power plants as an alternative energy source and continued
8 research and development for encapsulation methods for spent fuel.

9
10 We support the use of wind and solar as alternative energy sources and the potential
11 landowner leasing opportunities.

12
13 We support local communities' ability to provide primary, supplemental or back-up power
14 utilizing all power resources available.

15
16 Oklahoma public utilities, municipalities and/or state-owned vehicles and school districts
17 with several buses, should be encouraged to use Oklahoma natural gas, ethanol blended gasoline,
18 bio-diesel and propane for fuel.

19
20 Coal produced in Oklahoma should be permitted to be used for the generation of electricity
21 within the state.

22
23 We support continuing research and construction of ethanol fuel plants and oilseed extraction
24 plants. Registration, permitting and licensing fees should be held to a minimum. We encourage
25 streamlining the permitting process for inland energy refineries, alternative energy production, and
26 food-grade oils.

27
28 We support research for energy alternatives appropriate to its area and environment.

29
30 We believe state and national legislation should provide tax incentives for exploration,
31 development and production of sustainable energy sources, including the development of
32 alternative fuels from our natural resources.

33
34 We support anti-trust actions to increase competition among private industries involved in
35 energy production.

36
37 We favor retaining oil and gas depletion allowances.

38
39 Intangible drilling costs should be maintained as a deductible expense, as an encouragement
40 to potential drillers.

41
42 We favor responsible drilling and exploration for oil and gas in the United States and its
43 territories.

44
45 In the case of fuel shortages, fuel for agriculture purposes should be given top priority after
46 domestic heating and cooling needs have been met.

47
48 We oppose creation of federal oil and gas corporations.

49
50 We support an oil import fee on foreign produced oil.

51

1 We oppose the importation of refined petroleum products.

2
3 We support legislation requiring all oil companies operating in Oklahoma to make available
4 to the royalty owner and the Oklahoma Tax Commission an annual audit of production of gas or
5 oil if requested from any well.

6
7 To relieve the ad valorem burden on landowners and to support and enhance schools and
8 local and county governments, we support the measurement and appropriate taxation of all types
9 of energy production that leave the State of Oklahoma.

10
11 Energy and energy related companies should be jointly and severally responsible for
12 damages to property and for incidental expenses such as transactional costs of updating abstracts.

13
14 AFR encourages protection of mineral owners with rights to participate and be involved and
15 included in class action suits to protect their income. We oppose mineral owners having to opt into
16 a lawsuit but rather support current law which considers the mineral owner automatically part of
17 the class action lawsuit.

18
19 All buried transmission lines should be clearly marked at frequent, visible locations showing
20 current company contact information.

21
22 Legislation should be enacted which provides that all easements automatically revert to the
23 surface owner of record and be restored no later than three years after the land ceases to be used
24 for the original intent of the easement.

25
26 We support requiring energy producers to maintain the roads, when they cross private
27 property to get to their lease.

28
29 We support gas balancing (proper accounting of production). Gas being gas balanced, should
30 be balanced in million cubic feet (MMcf).

31
32 We support the required use of electronic meters and unannounced inspection of such
33 metering devices on gas wells by Oklahoma Corporation Commission employees to ensure more
34 accurate measurement and proper payment for all production.

35
36 Verified reports and records of production maintained and indexed by the Oklahoma
37 Corporation Commission should be available for the general public and royalty owners or their
38 attorneys inspection.

39
40 We propose increasing fines for inaccurate measurement and improper payment of gas and
41 oil wells and to use the penalties to fund the monitoring program.

42
43 We oppose any effort or decision that would permit an oil company to charge the mineral
44 owner a portion of production or transportation costs incurred in the production or sale of oil or
45 gas.

46
47 We support a procedure to allow a current landowner to reclaim minute mineral interests.
48 Any monies held in escrow as unclaimed mineral proceeds should also revert back to the surface
49 owner.

1 We oppose any lending institution that forecloses on any land separating the minerals from
2 surface when selling that property.

3
4 When mineral leases expire on land or when a well ceases production, the lessee should be
5 required to clear the records.

6
7 We encourage all mineral owners participate in mineral owners' association organizations.

8
9 We support new legislation to make forced pooling laws fair to both the mineral owner and
10 producer. "Good faith negotiations" should be clearly defined through legislation.

11
12 We favor the Oklahoma Corporation Commission requiring that spacing be based on
13 characteristics of the producing zone. If acreage is forced-pooled and another formation is
14 produced, permitting smaller spacing, that acreage pool in excess of the smaller spacing should be
15 released from the pooling order.

16
17 We urge continued monitoring of all legislation and activity on natural gas deregulation.

18
19 We urge drilling companies who are issued a drilling permit be held accountable to the
20 government agency or agencies for properly casing and cementing the hole to safe levels and
21 violators should have their right to operate within the State of Oklahoma terminated.

22
23 We support an Oklahoma Corporation Commission rule change requiring the removal of
24 drilling fluids from reserve pits at the landowner's request.

25
26 Public funds should be used as a last resort to plug all abandoned oil and gas wells that have
27 been improperly plugged, with the abandoning company having primary liability.

28
29 We support efforts to get oil companies to use closed pit drilling systems.

30
31 We recommend that water discharge and other natural extractants, including mud and shale
32 resulting from oil and gas drilling, not be classified as hazardous or toxic waste.

33 34 35 ENVIRONMENT

36
37 We oppose the consolidation of the Oklahoma Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and
38 the Oklahoma Water Resources Board (OWRB).

39
40 We support a cost-share program through DEQ to assist rural Oklahomans in proper septic
41 systems installation and updating to address water quality concerns, to existing installations.

42
43 We support research and testing of drilling mud used in soil farming prior to application in
44 addition to other permitting required.

45
46 We oppose any increases in emissions standards for agriculture unless compliance can be
47 achieved at no net cost to the owner.

48
49 We oppose climate change regulations until sound science conclusively determines the
50 contributing influences. Should regulations be passed, we firmly support the inclusion of
51 provisions that are not detrimental to agriculture.

1
2 We support fact-based research on the possible causes and effects of climate change.

3
4 We oppose the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) proposing and implementing
5 climate control regulations as a back door method to achieving climate change in the absence of
6 passage of federal legislation.

7
8 We oppose international indirect land use in calculation of carbon footprints.

9
10 We support citizens taking the lead in bringing about sound, reasonable and effective
11 solutions to the problem of pollution and favor a cooperative and voluntary approach.

12
13 We support efforts to limit pollution and run-off in urban developments.

14
15 We oppose the classification of agricultural lands as “point sources” of pollution, unless
16 scientifically proven.

17
18 We support agriculture producers in their efforts to establish soil and water conservation
19 practices for producing food and fiber. However, we oppose regulatory rules by EPA or DEQ
20 dealing with non-point water quality and Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) that unduly
21 burdens agriculture and is not scientifically proven.

22
23 We support only scientifically based water quality standards in streams or water bodies listed
24 on EPA’s 303(d) list in determining the need for a TMDL. In addition, we favor sufficient funding
25 for a 90 percent cost-share for best management practice implementation must be in place before
26 any regulatory TMDL is implemented.

27
28 We believe a landowner who has been issued a resource conservation management plan by
29 the environmental agency with jurisdiction over non-source pollution shall be considered in
30 compliance with the law and not polluting.

31
32 We oppose rules by EPA dealing with air particulate matter regulation regarding production
33 agriculture. We favor exemption for production agriculture.

34
35 We oppose any EPA policy directive, which would mandate the testing and/or certification
36 of farmland, unless a federal fund is established to pay necessary costs of meeting certification
37 requirements.

38
39 We recommend that agriculture no longer be regulated by the EPA, but solely regulated by
40 the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA).

41
42 We support an amendment to the EPA’s authority requiring that scientific proof be provided
43 that a situation detrimental to the public’s health exists prior to exercising its administrative
44 authority, unless deemed by local, state or national governing bodies as an emergency.

45
46 We encourage using licensed or trained individuals to do repair on air conditioning units for
47 machinery and vehicles used in normal operation of a farming business.

48
49 We support exemption of on-farm fuel tanks from EPA and state agency regulation.
50

1 Counties that adopt a “green box” program should ensure that the sites are maintained and
2 that they do not create a public nuisance to adjoining landowners.
3

4 We urge the Oklahoma Legislature to appropriate funds for a state solid waste disposal
5 program administered by each county.
6

7 We support permits being issued for any dump or landfill only if located a reasonable
8 distance from a public school or flood plain.
9

10 We strongly believe it is in the nation’s best interest to have a partnership of federal and state
11 governments vested with the authority to make and carry out regulations concerning the use of any
12 agricultural pesticides and/or herbicides.
13

14 We support the Oklahoma beautification program for planting flowers, trees and shrubs and
15 urge our members, local and county organizations to participate in the program.
16

17 We favor enforcing existing laws and penalties on littering and illegal dumping on the
18 highway and county roads and private property.
19

20 We are in favor of continued environmental monitoring on industrial and municipal waste
21 disposal sites.
22

23 We strongly encourage DEQ to regulate state waste transported into the state in the same
24 way that intrastate waste is regulated.
25

26 We support a fee structure for imported waste that is at minimum equal to the exporting state.
27

28 We oppose the split flow of Fayetteville, Ark., sewage into the scenic Illinois River.
29

30 We support prohibiting any person, firm or corporation from polluting the land, ponds, lakes
31 or streams and that those in violation restore the polluted area to original condition and be subject
32 to punishment by appropriate fines.
33

34 We strongly support the efforts of the Oklahoma Energy Resources Board (OERB) to clean
35 up abandoned well sites, unused equipment and non-producing wells upon request of the
36 landowner.
37

38 We support restoration of land to the original condition at the request of landowners
39 following oil, gas, mineral or electricity production and/or transmission activity.
40

41 We support matters of mineral litigation to be considered in the local court system rather
42 than the Oklahoma Corporation Commission.
43

44 We propose that just compensation be given to those individuals whose homes have been
45 damaged or made unlivable by commercial entities.
46

47 We propose applicants for construction of future commercial waste disposal sites should
48 notify every surface owner within one mile of the proposed disposal site and such permit
49 application notice should be run three times in the newspaper located closest to such sites.
50

1 When the location of an industrial waste disposal site is considered, the adverse financial
2 impact on the surrounding property must be considered. We oppose waste disposal wells, including
3 those for commercial salt water or toxic chemical disposal sites, being permitted on land which
4 overlays a major source of fresh water.
5

6 We favor a law that would make any person or company found guilty of dumping salt water
7 on public and private lands subject to a minimum fine of \$2,500, with a right for citizens' damage
8 suits, except in state roadbed construction when covered by asphalt or pavement.
9

10 A family-owned and operated confined animal and/or poultry farm should be subjected to
11 only those anti-pollution laws enforced by the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry
12 (ODAFF). State law and ODAFF rules on confined animal and poultry operations should not be
13 more restrictive than federal law, rules and regulations. We encourage reasonable, yet effective,
14 standards for protection of underground and surface water from confined animal and poultry
15 operations. We support ODAFF maintaining the delegated authority for the EPA National
16 Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). We support state funding for this delegated
17 authority.
18

19 We support incidental grazing of conservation buffer strips.
20

21 We favor protecting landowners who purchased their property after conducting an
22 environmental audit which found no contamination from liability from contamination later
23 discovered.
24

25 We support a mandatory refundable deposit placed on any recyclable beverage container.
26

27 We encourage recycling programs and biodegradable packaging.
28

29 We support adding agriculture tires to the state recycling program on a voluntary basis.
30

31 **TRIBAL ISSUES** 32

33
34 While we acknowledge tribal sovereignty, we encourage tribes and state and local
35 government entities to cooperate on economic development and agriculture issues.
36

37 We support intergovernmental collaboration between local, state, federal and tribal
38 agencies to establish practical air and water quality standards.
39

40 We support the purchase of hunting and fishing licenses by tribal governments from the
41 Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation to issue to tribal members.
42

43 We support tribal governments investing in agricultural enterprises as a sustainable
44 economic endeavor.
45

46 **WATER** 47

48
49 Water quality tests mandated by state or federal agencies should be paid for by the agency
50 requiring such test.
51

1 We support the minimum flow of water should be allowed at all times from federal dams,
2 with notice given to news media in the area affected when an excessive amount of water is to be
3 released. The minimum flow should be based on the average flow of water in the streams before
4 the dam was built.

5
6 We ask that Congress define “navigable water” to mean waters that can be reasonably
7 navigated for the movement of goods including agricultural products.

8
9 We oppose the deletion of the word “navigable” waters from the federal Clean Water Act
10 (CWA) which expands the taking of private property and provides additional intrusiveness.

11
12 Currently a set gross production tax funding amount is dedicated to a water Rural Economic
13 Assistance Program (REAP) and is divided equally between the Oklahoma Water Resources Board
14 (OWRB), the Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation
15 Dept. for water related initiatives. We strongly support the continuation of this effort and lifting
16 the cap on this fund and making it a permanent dedicated revenue source.

17
18 State water quality statutes affecting agricultural water use should be administered and
19 enforced by the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF).

20
21 We support transparency and the application of the open meetings law with respect to
22 negotiations by the Governor, his/her designee and/or OWRB with other states, tribes,
23 municipalities, authorities and/or individuals for the sale or transfer of ownership of Oklahoma
24 water from the originating basin of origin.

25
26 We support the water rights of long-term water users being protected from having their water
27 depleted or polluted.

28
29 We support developing and continuing local, regional comprehensive state water plans on a
30 local, state and regional basis, and continuing regional representation on the Oklahoma Water
31 Resources Board.

32
33 We support mineral and groundwater rights remaining with the surface rights unless
34 otherwise specified and noted.

35
36 We support a complete ban on fresh underground water being used or sold for use by the
37 permit holder of water rights for secondary oil recovery.

38
39 We support reclaiming water utilized in energy development for reuse instead of using fresh
40 water.

41
42 To preserve our fresh water resources, we encourage research and development of filtration
43 processes to utilize non-fresh water resources to be utilized in energy exploration and
44 development.

45
46 We urge drilling companies, who are issued a drilling permit, be held accountable to the
47 government agency or agencies for properly casing and cementing the hole to safe levels to prevent
48 any possibility of contamination of drinking water. If the drilling company is found in violation,
49 the proper government agency should be responsible for terminating their right to operate within
50 the State of Oklahoma or drilling wells in the State of Oklahoma.

1 The people in the area of a reservoir should have first priority concerning the use of the water
2 or revenue from that water.

3
4 We believe that the regional watershed from which water may be utilized or transferred
5 and/or sold should receive at least a reasonable portion of any economic benefit from the sale or
6 transfer of water out of or within the borders of the watershed through a pre-established trust fund.

7
8 “Excess water” should be clearly defined by the OWRB.

9
10 We support all conservation techniques in the State of Oklahoma.

11
12 We support continued studies on underground aquifer water storage, recharge and recovery.

13
14 We oppose the sale of Oklahoma water out-of-state without meeting the needs of the state
15 and local area and encourage federally recognized Indian tribes to do likewise.

16
17 We support adequate time being allowed for public scrutiny on all compacts dealing with
18 public interest, including, but not limited to, water issues.

19
20 We believe any sale of water across the state boundaries should be voted on by the citizens
21 within the counties in the watershed from which water will be taken.

22
23 We encourage a fair and equitable assessment and not a flat fee assessment relative to annual
24 renewals of water usage.

25
26 We support agricultural use of water from Altus-Lugert Lake.

27
28 If a comprehensive water plan passed by the Legislature includes monitoring of wells, we
29 support public funding for the cost of such activity.

30
31 We support Congressional action mandating the implementation of conservation practices
32 of municipal water consumption prior to draw-down from U.S. Army Corps of Engineer
33 reservoirs.

34
35
36 **A. RURAL WATER**

37
38 We support the Oklahoma Rural Water Association (ORWA) in their efforts to restrict
39 encroachment from municipal water districts into rural water districts.

40
41 Construction of rural water and sewer systems should be expanded and more federal and
42 state grant money should be made available for the program, proportionate to that being used by
43 cities and municipalities.

44
45 Rural water systems should provide for future growth and the first years of repayment
46 schedule should be at a reduced rate.

47
48 We support programs to provide water for rural water districts, and municipal or industrial
49 use in rural areas, provided the water rights of local landowners are protected.

50
51 We oppose any restriction on farmers and ranchers drilling their own water wells.

1
2 We support the concept of “dry fire hydrants” in rural areas and the Insurance Services Office
3 (ISO) to allow appropriate fire credits.

4 We support state grant funds for added fire protection through rural water districts.
5

6 We oppose any new rules from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that add to the
7 list of contaminants and that decrease the acceptable levels of contaminants that municipalities and
8 rural water districts must test for, unless backed by sound science.
9

10 We encourage county water districts and municipalities cooperation in servicing customers
11 in annexed areas.
12

13 TAXATION

14
15
16 Oklahoma lands acquired by the state or federal government, municipalities or by non-profit
17 organizations, including commercial real property and farm and ranch land owned by religious
18 institutions, should be subject to ad valorem tax, except worship centers and parsonages should
19 remain exempt.
20

21 We support a vote of the people for any fuel tax increase, and we believe all fuel tax revenues
22 should be directed to the original intended purpose of improving highways, roads and bridges.
23

24 We recommend legislation allowing farmers to use funds from the sale of their family farm
25 to create a retirement fund similar to a 401K or Keogh plan. Taxes would be paid on income as it
26 is withdrawn, rather than on a lump sum as a capital gain tax.
27

28 We support maintaining the current capital gains tax at 15 percent or less.
29

30 We support harmonizing state laws on combine entry from one state to another.
31

32 We support harmonizing and reciprocating Oklahoma state law with other states’ farm tax
33 exemptions.
34

35 We oppose taxes being levied on stored grain.
36

37 We oppose the imposition of any additional and/or movement of the federal motor fuel tax
38 to achieve budget deficit reduction.
39

40 We support the collection of road use fuel taxes at the terminal point.
41

42 Capital gains (now taxable income) must be eliminated for farmers and ranchers on “write-
43 down” portion of their loans when they restructure their loans through voluntary conveyances to
44 stay in business.
45

46 We support the Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Chapter 12 bankruptcy reorganization for
47 farmers however the IRC must be amended to create separate tax status for the Chapter 12 estate.
48

49 We support state tax provisions favorable to producers forced to liquidate livestock and
50 which will not conflict with federal tax provisions.

1 We support the current federal tax provisions granted by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
2 for producers forced to liquidate livestock.

3
4 We support allowing a tax deduction for farmers for hay and grain donated to disaster areas.
5 This deduction should be extended to food commodities donated to hungry and needy people.

6
7 We support tax incentives or tax credits for producers who purchase or have purchased
8 equipment to convert from conventional till farming to no-till or minimum till for controlling wind
9 erosion and water conservation.

10
11 We support providing tax credit incentives to retiring farmers who sell their agriculture
12 operations to a young farmer to further encourage new operators to enter production agriculture.

13
14 We oppose the federal sales tax called “value added tax.”

15
16 Whenever land is purchased under the threat of eminent domain, capital gains taxes should
17 not be required.

18
19 We oppose interest rates being imputed by the IRS to individuals who sell their property and
20 provide financing at a rate lower than the rate being charged by financial institutions. The IRS
21 should not be permitted to charge that individual the difference between the lower rate being
22 charged and the going rate being charged by financial institutions.

23
24 We support a more strict definition of IRC Sec. 1031 land exchanges limiting non-taxable
25 events to the current use of both properties and the intended use for the next five years.

26
27 We favor taxing the money earned in the United States by any citizen of another country.

28
29 We favor increasing the state income tax exemption to match the federal amount.

30
31 We support a constitutional amendment providing additional millage for county
32 governments, subject to 60 percent approval by voters of individual counties.

33
34 We oppose replacing state income tax with increased property taxes and/or taxes on services.

35
36 For state revenue development we support fair and equitable treatment of all minerals.

37
38 In the absence of total elimination, we recommend a federal estate tax exemption be set at
39 \$5 million and indexed thereafter to inflation.

40
41 We support increasing the annual gift tax exemption level.

42
43 We strongly encourage American Farmers & Ranchers Life to educate our membership
44 through estate planning seminars across the state.

45
46 We request that an additional person, with an agricultural background, be placed on any ad
47 valorem task force. This person is to be appointed by the County Assessors Association and
48 confirmed by the Oklahoma Senate.

49
50 We support property taxes being based on fair market value.

51

1 We recommend use of county soil conservation maps and surveys to tax agriculture land as
2 to its use.

3
4 We call for an accounting to the people of Oklahoma by the Oklahoma Tax Commission
5 and/or State Auditor of all tax revenue generated by liquor by the drink, parimutuel betting, Indian
6 compacts and lottery tickets.

7
8 We ask the Oklahoma Legislature to continue the present practice of assessing agricultural
9 land based on 75 percent of rental income, 25 percent of comparable sales, to arrive at a per point
10 value.

11
12 We strongly support continuation of the sales tax exemption, tax credits and income tax
13 deductions used in agriculture.

14
15 We support a state-wide, sales tax-free weekend for consumers.

16
17 We do not support an increase in ad valorem taxes as a means to solve a state revenue
18 shortfall.

19
20 We support vehicle excise tax being collected only on the vehicle's first sale. We support
21 repeal of the re-registration fee.

22
23 The Constitution of the State of Oklahoma should be adhered to in the use of ad valorem
24 taxes, with oversight by the Oklahoma State Auditor and Inspector Office.

25
26 We oppose any attempts by oil, gas and wind power companies to exempt their production
27 equipment from tax rolls.

28
29 We oppose the mandatory licensing of farm trailers for any purpose with the exception of
30 commercial use.

31
32 The Oklahoma Tax Commission should notify and clarify with businesses concerning farm
33 items that are tax exempt.

34
35 We support putting all road user taxes in a trust fund for the construction and maintenance
36 of roads. The road user funds now going to other uses should be replaced, dollar for dollar, from
37 the general fund.

38
39 We support the return of investment tax credit on all American-made products.

40
41 Because the collection of taxes falls within the purview of the Oklahoma Tax Commission
42 and the IRS, we believe a farmer's responsibility, with respect to assisting these state and federal
43 agencies, should be limited to a single, annual reporting of wages paid to farm workers.

44
45 We oppose attempts to reduce the percentage of voters necessary to pass school bond issues
46 from 60 percent to a majority vote.

47
48
49
50
51

1 **GOVERNMENT**

2
3 We fully support the usage of “God” on government buildings, legal documents and legal
4 tender and we oppose the removal of existing references.

5
6 We unanimously encourage all elected officials to vote the issues rather than partisan voting.

7
8 We believe that fees or taxes collected by government for a specific purpose should be used
9 for that intended purpose.

10
11 We support the education and enforcement of the military code for the proper care and use
12 of the flag of the United States. Any intentional defamation or destruction of the flag should be
13 considered a felony. We oppose protesters at all military and civilian funerals.

14
15
16 **A. IMMIGRATION**

17
18 We favor immigration laws that continue to embody our creed of acceptance of immigrants,
19 while not burdening our governments’ and citizens’ social and other resources.

20
21 We support opportunities to immigrants to earn citizenship that are willing to make a positive
22 social, economic and patriotic contribution as U.S. citizens.

23
24 We support a documented guest worker program for immigrant laborers that results in these
25 individuals paying taxes, obeying local, state and federal laws and have the option of returning to
26 their home country, with full access to the judicial system.

27
28 We oppose illegal immigrant minor children, while awaiting processing, being incarcerated
29 with convicted adult felons.

30
31 We support immigration laws that provide a system of identification, classification and
32 taxation.

33
34 We oppose requiring agriculture employers to pay more than the state minimum wage rate
35 and, in addition, oppose the requirement that agriculture employers be required to provide housing,
36 transportation and other benefits to employees hired through the H-2A visa program.

37
38 We support the development of new authorization documents that cannot be manipulated or
39 duplicated and include biometric identifiers. Until such a system is developed we oppose
40 employers of guest workers to be responsible for the authenticity of guest worker documentation.

41
42
43 **B. POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEES (PAC’s)**

44
45 We support an opportunity to be implemented through the AFR billing process for
46 members/policyholders to be able to make a voluntary contribution to the American Farmers &
47 Ranchers Association Political Action Committee (PAC) to support candidates that support our
48 policies and issues.

49
50 We oppose the use of super PACs during the election process and find their intrusion to be
51 detrimental.

1
2 **C. FEDERAL**
3

4 We support the Constitution of the United States.
5

6 We strongly urge Congress to move forward on the construction of U.S. Army Corp of
7 Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation lakes and reservoirs.
8

9 We oppose any efforts to convert U.S. land descriptions to the metric system.
10

11 The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and other government agencies should be held liable to
12 pay attorney fees of both parties when the government loses the case.

13 We support an amendment to the U.S. Constitution requiring a balanced federal budget.
14

15 We believe the United States should not loan money to any entity of government or a foreign
16 power for less than that it must pay to borrow the money.
17

18 We oppose approval of any additional federal holidays.
19

20 We favor legislation to require disclosure of foreign ownership and control of American real
21 estate and business firms.
22

23 We support federal policies and programs which encourage U.S. investors to invest in
24 America. We oppose programs such as those administered by the U.S. Agency for International
25 Development (USAID), which provides monetary incentives for U.S.-based businesses to relocate
26 in foreign countries.
27

28 We oppose the placing of U.S. troops under the command of the United Nations
29 commanders.
30

31 We encourage reimbursement by any foreign country to the United States for assistance
32 given. Restitution could be monetary or oil equivalency payments.
33

34 We support legislation that clearly defines “strikes” as any work action which disrupts
35 services performed by public employees, without regard to what it might be called, such as “slow
36 down,” “mass resignation,” “report-in-sick,” “blue flu,” “voluntary suspension,” etc. Penalties
37 provided by law should be mandatory and not negotiable by the government entity involved.
38

39 We believe the bonus compensation used by the federal government should be used as an
40 incentive and reward program for excellence instead of part of the salary package and the
41 expectations of employees. Bonus compensation should be separate and apart from the regular
42 salary.
43

44 We oppose the efforts of the state and federal government to take over any part or branch of
45 county government.
46

47 We must have more meaningful, comprehensive campaign finance reform in the election of
48 our state and national legislators, officials and president. We encourage further study of public
49 campaign financing as a means of limiting the influence of large corporations, self interest groups
50 and the wealthiest individuals.
51

1 We believe it should be illegal for non-citizens, foreign companies and/or foreign countries
2 to provide money for candidates for offices in the United States.

3
4 We oppose granting congressional representation to the District of Columbia.

5
6 We support amending the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act so that reasonable tolerances
7 can be established for food production; and that absolute proof must be established that food and
8 additives will not adversely affect animal and human health by its use.

9
10 We encourage the United States Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee to utilize the
11 abundant and thorough evidence suggesting that Americans should consume a balanced diet rich
12 in nutrients which includes lean meats and dairy products and we encourage the increased usage
13 of Oklahoma produced agricultural commodities in all state and federal institutions.

14
15 We oppose the political appointments of “czars” in the White House which often have more
16 political power than secretarial appointments which require more congressional scrutiny and
17 confirmation. We believe such appointments should be sharply curtailed and require additional
18 oversight by Congress.

19
20 We support appointed federal judges being subject to congressional review and re-confirmed
21 periodically, every six years.

22
23 We support legislation that Congress cannot receive a salary raise to take effect during their
24 current term of office or change their retirement status to take effect during their current term of
25 office.

26
27 We support retaining the present U.S. Electoral College method of electing the U.S. President
28 and Vice-President. We oppose restricting our right to vote by limiting terms of our national
29 legislators. We support repeal of current term restrictions on state legislators.

30
31 We support a re-assessment of all retirement programs for county, state and federal
32 employees and elected officials to assure that they are fair to both the employee and the taxpayer.

33
34
35 **D. STATE**

36
37 We oppose any move that would encourage consolidation of power, more specifically into
38 the office of the Governor.

39
40 We oppose the removal or transfer of inspection on any agriculture practices from the
41 Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF) to any other state agency.

42
43 We support adequate funding for ODAFF to meet staffing requirements of day to day needs
44 and to utilize these personnel to address catastrophic occurrences. We oppose disproportionate
45 cuts which would adversely impact all natural resource agencies.

46
47 We encourage legislation that prohibits the discharge of fireworks from or onto private
48 property, without prior written permission from the landowner.

49
50 We support legislation to simplify the probate of estates including the excessive costs of
51 abstracting.

1
2 We oppose the Oklahoma Attorney General’s circumvention of the proper regulatory
3 agencies relating to the investigation and litigation of potential environmental compliance.
4

5 We support the Oklahoma Ethics Commission’s efforts to affect standards of behavior which
6 will result in more public confidence. However, to encourage public service on boards and
7 commissions we recommend that reporting requirements be not overly intrusive.
8

9 We support the removal of the straight party voting option on election ballots in the state of
10 Oklahoma.
11

12 We support a 60 percent favorable approval vote by citizens for the passage of all bond
13 issues.
14

15 We oppose land use planning and zoning, unless controlled at the local level by the cities
16 and counties affected, with family farmers and ranchers adequately represented on all boards and
17 commissions dealing with zoning, land purchase, leasing transfer, environment, health and
18 planning in recognition of the need to preserve agriculture land in the future.
19

20 We encourage ODAFF to serve as an intermediary for producers with export opportunities.
21

22 The Oklahoma Legislature should be prohibited from diverting funds from various state
23 retirement systems to fund state government, and honor existing obligations.
24

25 We support efficiencies in all state agencies. We object to the state legislature removing
26 money from state agency revolving funds to balance the budget; particularly, from non-
27 appropriated state agencies whose funds are received from entities they regulate, not state tax
28 revenue.
29

30 We oppose a state constitutional convention. Any amendments for the state constitution
31 should be submitted to a vote of the people in the form of a single-issue state question.
32

33 With respect to ballot initiatives, we support a constitutional amendment which would
34 provide fairness to both rural and urban constituencies and require all initiative petition signature
35 drives achieve the requisite percent as prescribed in the constitution—in each of the congressional
36 districts as opposed to statewide—to be deemed as having sufficient signatures to be placed on the
37 ballot for voter consideration.
38

39 We will work to prevent and repeal excessive rules, regulations and legislation which levy
40 rigid requirements in the name of “the public interest,” but that instead, penalize citizens or deny
41 them needed services by such excessive regulations.
42

43 We support the enforcement of state laws concerning the displaying and removal of
44 campaign signs.
45

46
47 **E. COUNTY**
48

49 County governments should be given a greater role in initiating environmental safeguards
50 and in developing economic opportunities within their counties.
51

1 State and federal funds allocated to support county and municipal governments should not
2 be diverted to other governmental entities or programs.

3
4 When the Oklahoma Legislature mandates additional services or expenditures by the
5 counties, the state must provide funding.

6
7 The reevaluation of property for tax purposes should be left as the responsibility of the county
8 assessors.

9
10 We support the present form of county government, with the current structure of eight elected
11 officials per county.

12
13 We oppose any elected state or county position being changed to an appointed position.

14
15 We support legislation requiring proposed salaries for county officers be publicized before
16 being finalized.

17
18 We favor intra-county district cooperative ownership and use of county road equipment.

19
20 We urge that travel expenses for official business of county officers and county
21 commissioners be verified claims rather than paid by a set travel/expense allowance.

22
23
24 **F. FEDERAL AGENCIES**

25
26 We recommend that government agencies' rules and regulations be more accountable and
27 balanced to the best interests of the people and reviewed regularly to alleviate the negative
28 effects on small businesses.

29
30 We support maintaining the Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) and the Animal and
31 Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS) within the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA). We
32 oppose any attempts to move these or any part of these programs to any other federal agency
33 outside USDA.

34
35 We oppose efforts to fragment the USDA by shifting traditional agencies to other
36 departments.

37
38 We support the USDA National Appeals Division as being the final decision on producer
39 appeal cases.

40
41
42 **UTILITIES**

43
44 We favor a requirement that towers 50-200 feet tall be visibly identified.

45
46 We support the use of some form of identification, such as tracer wires, for underground
47 utilities that cannot otherwise be easily located.

48
49 When utility location services are required by law, there should be a finite response time.
50

1 We favor that final authority for utility rate making remain with officials elected by the
2 people, namely the Oklahoma Corporation Commission. But, we oppose special rate treatment by
3 the Oklahoma Corporation Commission.

4
5 We oppose unjustified rate increases.

6
7 We support legislation to direct the Oklahoma Corporation Commission to regulate
8 telephone rates for Oklahoma in such a way that intrastate rates will be no more than comparable
9 to interstate rates.

10
11 We oppose the sale of federally-owned hydroelectric plants that serve our cooperatives and
12 municipalities.

13 14 15 **FARM POLICY**

16
17 To establish a foundation for achieving our long-term goal of returning profitability to the
18 family farm system of agriculture and economic stability to rural areas, we recommend that the
19 following principles be incorporated within U.S. farm policy:

- 20
21 1. We oppose the use of embargoes and sanctions of agricultural goods, unless
22 agriculture producers are properly compensated.
- 23
24 2. We encourage the development of a farm program that is simplified and economically
25 beneficial for producers.
- 26
27 3. Farm programs and regulations should be finalized prior to the sowing/planting
28 seasons of all crops.
- 29
30 4. Commodity program payments should be delivered to participating farmers in a
31 timely fashion.
- 32
33 5. State and county Farm Service Agency (FSA) / Natural Resources Conservation
34 Service (NRCS) committees should be granted greater authority in determining
35 county and district needs.
- 36
37 6. We support retention of the present historical formula (1910-1914 base) as a yardstick
38 for measuring farm costs and income compared to present day.
- 39
40 7. We support the administration of farm programs through elected community and
41 county farmer committees.
- 42
43 8. We support adequate federal participation in funding soil and water conservation
44 programs. Land diversion programs should not discourage long-term conservation
45 and soil building practices.
- 46
47 9. We support the school breakfast, lunch, farm-to-school and milk programs.
- 48
49 10. We support use and expansion of the Office of Food for Peace (PL 480) programs
50 with proper oversight of food commodities distributed.
- 51

- 1 11. We strongly believe that all food and fiber products imported into the United States
2 must comply with U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) quality, safety and health
3 standards.
- 4
5 12. We support indexing of commodity target prices to reflect cost of production and a
6 reasonable return.
- 7
8 13. Low interest loans and financial assistance should be available to family farmers and
9 ranchers to help them establish viable farming and ranching operations.
- 10
11 14. We support the farmers' right to update their proven yields and receive reflective farm
12 program benefits based on proven yields in lieu of FSA program yields.
- 13
14 15. We oppose payment limitations merely based on the size of the operation.
- 15
16 16. We support future farm policy that recognizes our geographical differences and pro-
17 vides flexibility regardless of the agriculture operation whether crops or livestock.
- 18
19 17. We support the continuing of farm program payments to producers who graze-out
20 their grain rather than mechanically harvest their grain.
- 21
22 18. We support continuation of federal disaster programs for livestock and crop production.
- 23
24 19. While we believe in traditional program payments, in lieu of these we support an en-
25 hancement of revenue assurance and crop insurance programs which encourages part-
26 icipation by producers.
- 27
28 20. We support restoration of the following items without budget baseline, and if possible
29 to be included as part of the permanent budget baseline: Small watershed rehabilita-
30 tion; grasslands reserve program; wetlands reserve program; supplemental agricult-
31 ural disaster assistance; livestock indemnity payments; livestock forage disaster pro-
32 gram; emergency assistance for livestock, honeybees and farm-raised catfish; funding
33 of pending rural development loan and grant applications; value-added agricultural
34 market development program grants and rural micro-entrepreneur assistance program.
- 35
36 21. We support permanent disaster authority assistance programs that provide quick and
37 adequate compensation.
- 38
39 22. We support enhancing, improving and strengthening crop insurance programs—
40 without further program cuts—as a risk management tool for producers.
- 41
42 23. We support continued funding of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), the Con-
43 servation Stewardship Program (CSP), Conservation Reserve Enhancement Pro-
44 gram (CREP) and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP); and cap-
45 ping CRP at 40 million acres and restoring the crop base after contract expiration.
- 46
47 24. We support establishment of a per acre payment on CRP which limits the payment
48 to the fair rental value.

- 1
- 2 25. Any cropland converted to grassland with a prior established crop base will have that
- 3 base protected until such time that the land is restored back to cropland use, and
- 4
- 5 26. In the interest of good conservation practices and not destroying residue which would
- 6 encourage erosion, we support allowing producers to qualify for prevented planting
- 7 for crop insurance/Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for acres in
- 8 areas categorized as severe drought.
- 9
- 10 27. We support Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP) contracts be allowed to qualify for
- 11 livestock feed assistance in times of severe drought to reduce the grazing pressure on
- 12 enrolled lands which could cause erosion.
- 13
- 14 28. We support higher emphasis on NRCS technical and financial assistance for EQIP con-
- 15 version to no-till and water conservation assistance, including pond clean-out and new
- 16 construction, and support FSA additional resources through the Emergency Conser-
- 17 vation Program for hooking up pasture taps, drilling wells, etc.
- 18
- 19 29. We support delivery of cost-share programs to the local level utilizing a network of
- 20 conservation districts' non-federal employees.
- 21
- 22 30. We support restoration of funding for technical assistance at FSA and NRCS to help
- 23 effectively implement the farm bill.
- 24
- 25 31. We support programs which reward producers for how they farm and not how much they
- 26 farm, such as the CSP.
- 27
- 28 32. We support cost share programs to improve irrigation systems and other methods of
- 29 water conservation.
- 30
- 31 33. We support restoration of authority to allow producers to extend beyond 15-year direct
- 32 or guaranteed loan borrowing from FSA.
- 33
- 34 34. We support reducing the paperwork requirements for young farmers to comply with
- 35 beginning farmer and rancher development loans and grants programs.
- 36
- 37 35. We support the federal government using available technology to monitor crop
- 38 production around the world and report both quantity and quality to American producers
- 39 in a timely manner.
- 40
- 41 36. We support continuation of the Farm Bill Supplemental Revenue Assistance Payments
- 42 (SURE) program in subsequent farm bills.
- 43
- 44 37. We support efforts to maximize the amount of dollars appropriated in the farm bill for
- 45 the purpose of farm program payments to help farmers and ranchers.

1 We oppose concentration and vertical integration that is detrimental to the family farm and
2 ranch operation in agriculture, with the exception of producer-owned cooperatives.

3
4 In an effort to promote homeland security and food safety, we strongly support only products
5 “born, raised, slaughtered and processed” or “sprouted, harvested, grown and processed” in this
6 country to be eligible to receive a U.S. label including products sold at eating establishments.

7
8 As “family farmer” is defined in this document, we support family farms as opposed to mega
9 farming operations and believe that program benefits, such as FSA guaranteed and direct loans,
10 should be directed to assist the family operator.

11
12 Current production information should be obtained from farmer-elected county FSA
13 committee members.

14
15 We support programs which educate the media on the function of agriculture.

16
17 We encourage the executive branch to make available to family farmers and ranchers any
18 funds appropriated for intended agricultural purposes by Congress.

19
20 We oppose the USDA selling government-held surplus commodity, which artificially
21 depresses the price received by producers.

22
23 We favor storage paid farmer-owned reserves not to exceed 25 percent of production.

24
25 Individuals holding warehouse receipts or scale tickets marked for storage will have
26 customer's priority in recovering their property when storage facilities file for bankruptcy.

27
28 Fixed land costs should be included as a cost of production in government calculations.

29
30 Land owned or leased by foreign governments or persons not citizens of the United States
31 should not be eligible for any U.S. farm policy programs.

32
33 We encourage the continued oversight of the federal school nutrition program by Congress
34 to reduce obesity, consider the impact on local school budgets, caloric intake needs relative to
35 student needs and participation by students.

36 37 38 **SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION**

39
40 All engineering work, on family farms or family owned corporation farms, mandated by the
41 Oklahoma Feedyard Act should be performed by Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
42 engineers within their respective districts.

43
44 Final authority over required conservation practices should be vested in the local soil
45 conservation districts and the county Farm Service Agency (FSA) committee.

46
47 We support the continuation of a state cost-share program for soil and water conservation
48 practices.

49
50 We support the established state fund for the purpose of matching federal funds and for state
51 maintenance funds to be administered by the Oklahoma Conservation Commission to repair and

1 maintain those watershed structures constructed by the conservation districts for the purpose of
2 flood control within the boundaries of the state of Oklahoma. We support national efforts to
3 provide rehabilitation funds for watershed structures.

4
5 We urge continuation of soil conservation districts and FSA programs with full authority
6 residing in the farmer-elected county and community committees.

7
8 We support and encourage Congress to fund the small upstream flood control projects
9 administered by NRCS.

10
11 We oppose conservation program provisions which penalize producers for early adaption of
12 stewardship practices.

13
14 We ask that a conservation program be designed with sufficient incentive to retire marginal
15 cropland from production.

16
17 We support and encourage the continued voluntary installation of best management practices
18 under the Clean Water Act (CWA) as it pertains to agricultural non-point sources of pollution.
19 Reasonable conservation compliance standards should be established by the local FSA county
20 committee and the local conservation district board based on the unique characteristics of the soils
21 in that county.

22
23 We oppose any and all efforts to re-direct CWA Sec. 319 funds away from the Oklahoma
24 Conservation Commission.

25
26 We support any legislative efforts to solidify the position of the Oklahoma Conservation
27 Commission as the state agency that receives and administers CWA Sec. 319 funds.

28
29 We encourage the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation to pursue any and all action to hold
30 the water quality work of the Oklahoma Conservation Commission, local conservation districts
31 and the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) NRCS in Oklahoma as a potential model for all states
32 to follow to address nonpoint source pollution through locally-led, voluntary, cooperative
33 conservation instead of through regulations or lawsuits.

34 35 36 **COMPETITION AND FAIR MARKETS**

37
38 We oppose non-family corporations which negatively impact production agriculture.

39
40 We support appropriate bonding requirements to ensure clean up by out-of-state and foreign
41 limited liability companies, corporations or partnerships, when working in Oklahoma.

42
43 We support state nuisance laws which provide rural residents with immunity from nuisance
44 claims for agricultural activities including marketing.

45
46 Only the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF) should be charged with
47 the enforcement and administration of all rules and regulations pertaining to production
48 agriculture.

49
50 We support legislation restricting investment and ownership or leasing of land and natural
51 resources by foreign nations and non-citizens.

1
2 We support poultry, swine and other contract growers in their efforts to enhance their
3 bargaining and negotiating positions so they may negotiate fair and equitable contracts with
4 corporate processors and integrators.
5

6 7 **MARKETING OF AG COMMODITIES** 8

9 We favor increased farmer-operator representation on exchange boards, specifically on those
10 committees responsible for rule-making on agricultural commodity contracts.
11

12 We support keeping the oversight and authorization of the Commodity Futures Trade
13 Commission (CFTC) within the U.S. House and Senate Agriculture Committees, and believe that
14 the CFTC should:
15

- 16 1. Guard against insider trading by individuals or firms which possess foreknowledge of
17 significant price changes due to large market transactions;
18
- 19 2. Ensure an adequate number of delivery points for hedging participants;
20
- 21 3. Work in cooperation with state securities enforcement agencies to crack down on
22 “boiler room” operations and other violations of the Commodities Exchange Act; and
23
- 24 4. Monitor, with special vigilance, any market movements which indicate the deliberate
25 accumulation of excessive speculative positions, and to exercise, when necessary, those
26 emergency powers granted by Congress.
27

28 Congress should investigate how the practice of short selling of commodities and futures
29 manipulation by major national or international grain and livestock companies adversely affects
30 the price farmers receive.
31

32 We oppose trading organizations accessing segregated funds.
33

34 We support sufficient bonding, federal insurance or other types of protection for persons
35 commercially engaged in trading stocks, bonds, financial instruments, livestock or crops.
36

37 We support the continuation of agricultural weights and measures activities by the Oklahoma
38 Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF).
39

40 41 **TRADE** 42

43 To facilitate the expedient delivery of commodities relative to trade opportunities we support
44 increased attention to maintenance of the waterways infrastructure of the United States.
45

46 We support bilateral and multi-lateral fair trade agreements, not free trade agreements, to
47 stabilize international grain marketing and to expand agricultural exports.
48

49 We support continuing efforts to normalize trade relations with Cuba.
50

1 We support maintaining balanced trade with foreign countries and imposing tariffs on
2 imports which disrupt domestic farm markets.

3
4 U.S. trade negotiators should consider human rights issues during negotiations on
5 international trade.

6
7 We recognize that food and agriculture have unique characteristics that differentiate
8 them from other sectors of the global economy. Because food is an integral part of human
9 life, every nation should be afforded the right to establish and maintain their own domestic
10 farm programs.

11
12 We favor appropriate action of equal value to counter lost markets caused by tariff and non-
13 tariff trade barriers.

14
15 We support U.S. funding of the World Bank to the extent that it is beneficial to the U.S.
16 economy.

17
18 We oppose the forgiveness of any foreign debt, whether military or economic.

19
20 We urge protection against the loss of American jobs.

21
22 We support a proposal that all foreign aid be in the form of credits to be used to buy American
23 goods and commodities.

24
25 We oppose export of fertilizer and other materials necessary for agricultural productions
26 when a definite need for these materials is evident in this country.

27
28 We support the initiation of tariffs to ensure a stable food supply.

29
30 We oppose importation of duty free renewable fuel.

31
32 We oppose any reduction of duties or tariffs on agricultural products imported to the United
33 States.

34
35 Food safety legislation must include a substantial increase in the inspection of imported food
36 and feed products. The cost of inspection should come from fees on imports. All imported food
37 and feed products should be inspected.

38
39 All beef imports should be counted under the beef import quota system and the current beef
40 import cap should be maintained.

41
42 We oppose the importation of products from countries that do not accept the importation of
43 U.S. agricultural products.

44
45 We favor increasing the per capita income limitation for countries eligible to receive aid
46 under the Food for Peace Program (PL 480).

47
48 When possible all U.S. military installations, government agencies and schools should be
49 required to use only food produced by American farmers and ranchers.

50
51 Contract sales for agriculture exports should be guaranteed.

1
2 We support exempting agriculture from trade sanctions. If embargoes or sanctions are
3 implemented, producers should be compensated for the loss of agricultural markets.

4
5 We oppose the establishment of the “department of trade” as a cabinet office.

6
7 We support legislation to review the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and
8 World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements because the agreements do not meet the original
9 expectations when signed by the United States

10
11 We believe all participating countries of the NAFTA agreement should abide by U.S. safety
12 standards for trucking when operating on U.S. highways.

13
14 We support agriculture organization representatives be included early in the process when
15 considering future trade agreements, when agriculture products are involved.

16
17 We oppose the WTO and specific trade agreements having undue influence on U.S. farm
18 policy which conflicts with the sovereignty and laws of the citizens of the United States.

19
20 We support full congressional deliberation prior to the enactment of any trade agreement.

21 22 23 **COMMODITIES**

24
25 We support research and promotion programs financed by mandatorily paid and voluntarily
26 refundable deductions from the proceeds of sales by producers of agricultural commodities with
27 disbursement of funds controlled solely by boards of domestic producers elected by those domestic
28 producers assessed. The producer boards also solely control the operations of the programs.

29
30 We support producing biotech commodities for a continued efficient and abundant food and
31 fiber supply as long as food safety is ensured, barriers are not created to interrupt trade between
32 nations or that negatively affect export possibilities for any commodity.

33
34 We support check-off programs for imported commodities being the same as domestic
35 commodities.

36
37 We support all weather disasters be treated equal with respect to indemnifying producers
38 and citizens.

39
40 We support the retention of the basic agribusiness infrastructure critical to rural America
41 which has been impacted by adverse weather conditions (i.e. grain elevators, livestock auctions
42 and cotton gins).

43
44 In order to protect agriculture producers we support the concept of indemnity funds and
45 being actively engaged in making certain indemnity funds are sufficient and flexible to keep up
46 with increasing market value.

47
48 We believe the news media should utilize scientific terminology when reporting issues
49 relevant to the agriculture industry which has the potential to impact commodity market prices to
50 agriculture producers. For example, instead of using “swine flu,” “H1N1” should be used, or
51 “BSE” instead of “mad cow.”

1
2 Be it resolved that all licensing entities for in-state and out-of-state custom harvesters, and
3 for-hire transporters of agriculture commodities and products collaborate to establish a centralized
4 permitting process.

5
6 We support research and development of industrialized hemp for use as fiber.
7

8
9 **A. WHEAT**

10
11 We encourage Congress to initiate legislation to control price-depressing sales of
12 government-owned wheat and the flood of price-depressing wheat imports.
13

14 We support inspection and compensation for producers, custom harvesters and handlers to
15 reduce losses caused by diseases such as Karnal Bunt.
16

17 No foreign materials whatsoever should be allowed to be added into wheat or feed grains for
18 export prior to or during the loading of ships for export.
19

20 Since grain buyers levy a discount on grain below a certain quality standard, they should also
21 pay a premium for grain that is better than standard with both discounts and premiums posted.
22

23 We support a coordinated effort among wheat producing countries to develop a genetically
24 enhanced variety with adequate research to ensure food safety and consumer acceptance.
25

26 We encourage the U.S. Wheat Associates to become more active in addressing domestic
27 concerns.
28

29
30 **B. COTTON**

31
32 Price support loan on cotton should be based on a domestic profitability concept, rather than
33 a foreign cotton exchange. As long as the present price support level is based on the Liverpool
34 Cotton Exchange, we ask that it be based on a six-month marketing period.
35

36 We support continuation of the boll weevil eradication program and maintaining boll weevil-
37 free status.
38

39 We favor keeping the cotton gins under the Oklahoma Corporation Commission.
40

41 We support cotton gin trash research, including fuel pelleting and cattle feed.
42

43
44 **C. LIVESTOCK**

45
46 We oppose the defining of animal manure, waste or nutrients as being considered hazardous
47 and regulated under state law or federal "Superfund" law, the Comprehensive Environmental
48 Response Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA).
49

50 We support reform and time reduction for record retention for all confined animal feeding
51 operations (CAFOs).

1
2 We support clarification of the rules on the closure of lagoons of current operating facilities
3 and for existing non-operating facilities.
4

5 We support continuing education requirements for CAFOs producers be on a basis of every
6 third year.
7

8 We support implementation of a livestock disaster program that compensates producers
9 when imports or disease affect the reduction of price by more than 10 percent.
10

11 We support keeping Livestock Assistance Program (LAP) in place and establishing a fund
12 so the payment factor can be kept at 100 percent to insure timely payments.
13

14 We support funding a cost share program to build hay barns to increase our state hay storage
15 capacity for times of emergency such as drought and wildfires.
16

17 We recommend enrollment in the Oklahoma State University Center for Veterinary Health
18 Sciences (OSU-CVHS) be expanded. Preference should be given to rural Oklahoma residents.
19

20 We support an initiative to address the shortage of state large animal practice veterinarians
21 that focuses on financial assistance for vet school education. We additionally support a low interest
22 loan or guaranteed loan for purchasing an existing practice or construction of a new large animal
23 clinic in rural Oklahoma. In exchange for both considerations the veterinarian will practice a
24 specified number of years in a rural area.
25

26 We oppose the requirement that veterinary drugs, be sold by prescription only. We support
27 full availability of veterinary drugs to agriculture producers in order to provide adequate animal
28 health care.
29

30 We support retaining the option of using antibiotics in medicines or feeds for animal health
31 preventative measures or when treating livestock that are sick, with a veterinarian's consultation.
32

33 We support the livestock owners' personal property right to treat their own animals and/or
34 engage veterinarians or lay people to do the same.
35

36 We support the responsible use of scientifically proven, safe production practices in livestock
37 and poultry.
38

39 We strongly support enforcement of anti-trust laws currently on the books, and anti-trust
40 laws must be strengthened and enforced to prevent the continued corporate dominance of
41 agriculture markets including but not limited to livestock feeding operations.
42

43 We urge more responsible enforcement of Sherman and Clayton Anti-Trust Acts.
44

45 We support accurate and effective mandatory price reporting, reflective of actual prices of
46 the major meat packers.
47

48 We support programs to educate producers on animal identification methods in order to
49 identify and assist in retrieving stolen livestock.
50

1 We support and encourage a livestock owner’s right to identify their livestock with hot iron
2 branding, tattooing, tagging or other types of identification.

3
4 We support the concept of a premise identification program. Any future programs dealing
5 with animal identification should be least burdensome to producers and maintain producer
6 confidentiality.

7
8 We support a producer’s voluntary application of technology, age verification and trace back
9 methods which can enhance producer profits.

10
11 We propose strengthening the cattle branding system by encouraging that the brand on
12 branded livestock be reflected on the bill of sale in all sales transactions.

13
14 We support legislation to require a “PI” brand on all persistently infected cattle sold at
15 livestock markets.

16
17 To deter livestock and rural theft, we support stronger penalties with forfeiture of assets
18 going into a revolving fund within the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF)
19 and support continued efforts by ODAFF to investigate livestock and rural thefts and the
20 prosecution of offenders.

21
22 We encourage the leadership of the various livestock species and general farm organizations
23 to work together to create a USDA approved established disaster plan to help protect the future of
24 our farmers and ranchers.

25
26 We support a mandatorily paid and voluntarily refundable check-off for lamb and wool.

27
28 We support an adequately funded beef check-off to continue the mission of market
29 promotion, research, nutrition, product safety and education.

30
31 We oppose an automatic referendum on the beef-check every five years.

32
33 We support pork and beef initiatives funded through check-off programs which educate
34 youth and adults about these industries and products.

35
36 We strongly oppose the re-introduction of predatory animals by any government agency.

37
38 We strongly favor legislative or regulatory changes that will give the right to any owner to
39 control any predatory animals when the owner and/or tenant, the owner’s family or the owner’s
40 property is in danger.

41
42 We favor competition in the marketplace; therefore, be it resolved that the following be
43 adopted and implemented through legislation:

- 44
45 1. A ban on packer ownership more than 14 days prior to slaughter.
46
47 2. Establish provisions for transparency in the market relating to base and forward
48 contracting, including a federal protection plan for whistleblowers and witnesses.
49
50 3. Clear delineation of spot markets and its functions.
51

- 1 4. Establish parameters for treble damages and recovery of attorney fees from consumers and
2 producers.
- 3
- 4 5. Ensure grade transparency uniformity at state inspections.
- 5
- 6 6. Modernize, re-codify, and enforce the Packers and Stockyards Act to meet the standards
7 and expectations of today’s consumers and producers for their protection.
- 8
- 9 7. Establish and implement a country-of-origin labeling program.
- 10
- 11 8. Create a USDA “Office of Special Counsel for Competition” to aggressively investigate
12 anti-competitive practices and market manipulation occurring in the agriculture sector and
13 have the authority and subpoena power to collect concentration-related information.
- 14

15 We demand that USDA reinstate its prohibition of ownership or control of custom feedlots
16 by packers.

17
18 We support the appropriate harvesting of equine in USDA inspected facilities and oppose
19 any legislation prohibiting transportation of equine for harvest.

20
21 We oppose a tax on methane gas released by livestock.

22
23 We encourage ODAFF to increase monitoring and testing for tuberculosis in livestock and
24 other species as required.

25 26 27 **D. DAIRY AND DAIRY PRODUCTS**

28
29 We support a stabilized supply of milk and milk products, at levels which will adequately
30 meet the needs of consumers. We further support improving the level of income for dairy farmers
31 to better meet their increased cost of production, in order to maintain a productive capacity to meet
32 anticipated future needs. Therefore, we support the Dairy Security Act in its entirety.

33
34 Imitation products should not be allowed to be labeled or advertised using dairy terms or
35 names. We oppose redefining the products currently set up with the USDA.

36
37 The present pricing method should be continued for fresh, reconstituted milk.

38
39 We support a stabilized supply of milk and milk products, at levels which will adequately
40 meet the needs of consumers.

41
42 We support improving the level of income for dairy farmers to better meet their increased
43 cost of production, in order to maintain a productive capacity to meet anticipated future needs.

44
45 We support raising the minimum standards for fluid whole milk to 10 percent solids; non-fat
46 and skim milk to 99 percent solids non-fat.

47
48 We oppose raising the import quota on dairy products and removing tariffs on imported dairy
49 products.

1 We encourage the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) to make efforts to return milk protein
2 casein plants to foster domestic use in the United States.

3
4
5 **E. PEANUTS**

6
7 We support a more accurate price discovery in the marketplace for peanuts.

8
9 We support an annual target price cost of production adjustment for peanuts.

10
11 We believe storage and handling fees for peanuts in the government loan program should be
12 paid by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA).

13
14
15 **F. OTHERS**

16
17 We urge and encourage all farmers to explore producing alternate cash crops where soil,
18 water and climate permits, and urge research and extension services at land grant universities to
19 supply valuable help in these areas.

20
21 We support a ban on castor bean production in the State of Oklahoma.

22
23 We oppose the growing, harvesting and processing of any crop which produces ricin, a toxic
24 substance which can be lethal to humans and animals, can be market disrupting and considered a
25 prime tool for use by terrorists to harm U.S. citizens.

26
27 Due to expanding canola production in Oklahoma, we support the creation of actuarial rates
28 that are put in place without prior written agreement requirements.

29
30
31 **FEED, SEED, FERTILIZER, FUEL**

32
33 We support research on the use of crops for pharmaceutical and nutraceutical purposes.

34
35 We support a program of adequate testing and sampling of commercial fertilizer and feed
36 and seed with penalties being assessed when analysis is below specifications.

37
38 We support educating farmers and grain handlers on the Plant Variety Protection Act (PVPA).

39
40 We support modification of the PVPA of 1994 with respect to royalty fees taking in to
41 consideration sound science, a reasonable period of time for specific commodities and on
42 percentage of purity of seed.

43
44 We support immunity from legal action for grain handlers from consequences of the PVPA
45 when handling grain.

46
47 We oppose agricultural producers being included in the Environmental Protection Agency's
48 (EPA) enforcement of the spill prevention containment and control system.

49
50 We believe that no state or federal executive order affecting the use of farm equipment or
51 farm chemicals should be issued without prior notice and public hearings.

1
2 Anhydrous ammonia should continue to be classified as non-hazardous for the purpose of
3 transporting nurse tanks on public roadways.

4
5 We encourage privately owned anhydrous ammonia facilities and equipment to meet the
6 same safety requirements and standards as that of licensed dealers. Furthermore, we encourage
7 private owners to attend anhydrous ammonia safety training classes.

8
9 We support funding for animal waste nutrients research.

10 11 **COMMISSIONS**

12 13 **B. COMMODITIES COMMISSION**

14
15
16 We support the commodity commissions, provided that the funds collected by force of law
17 are used for research, promotion, education and policy development, and that their use for political
18 purposes be strictly prohibited.

19
20 We oppose state government taking commodity check-off funds to balance budgets.

21
22 We support check-off programs on all commodities and periodic reporting to those paying
23 for the check-off. We support mandatorily paid and voluntarily refundable check-off programs.

24
25 We support the collection of royalty fees on the sale of products developed by commodity
26 check-off research dollars.

27
28 We support the right of referendum by securing signatures of 10 percent of qualified
29 producers of a commodity.

30
31 All referenda should be conducted by mail or electronic media to ensure maximum
32 participation by producers. Only eligible producers of a commodity shall have a vote on who is
33 chosen for the promotion board that oversees collection and spending of funds. The eligible
34 producer who receives the greatest number of producer votes must be seated.

35
36 We support the right of referendum for a district to recall the appointment of the
37 commissioner from that district.

38
39 We urge the commissions to direct greater effort toward removing restrictions or obstructions
40 that unduly limit the flow of agriculture commodities into domestic and foreign markets (such as
41 embargoes, sanctions, strikes, grading standards, unreasonable inspection rules, and banning farm
42 chemicals without sufficient cause and inequitable quality standards on imports).

43
44 We oppose the consolidation of commodity commissions and/or any commission being
45 placed under the control of any state agency.

46
47 We support the ability of commodity commissions to develop a trust in which to deposit and
48 utilize commission funds.

49
50 We support exempting all agricultural commodity commissions from the Office of
51 Management and Enterprise Services state purchasing system.

1
2 We favor at least 20 percent of commodity commissions' gross income being used for
3 research in Oklahoma.
4

5
6 **B. SCHOOL LAND COMMISSION**
7

8 Leaseholders of school lands should be notified of a sale or re-lease.
9

10 We support the sale of school land if no more than 5 percent of the school lands in any county
11 are sold within a 12-month period and if all sales of school land are deposited within the trust fund,
12 invested and not made available for use by the Oklahoma Legislature for appropriation purposes.
13 All dividends should be returned to be used for the school children of Oklahoma.
14

15 Lessees, who have made improvements on state school lands, should be reimbursed the fair
16 market value for those improvements. Adjoining landowners also should be reimbursed for the
17 portion that he or she paid for when the improvement was made, such as for building a fence.
18

19
20 **C. WILDLIFE COMMISSION**
21

22 We support hunter safety education courses take place in a classroom setting with instruction
23 by a qualified instructor.
24

25 We believe licenses should not be required for activities not related to hunting/fishing on
26 Oklahoma Dept. of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) land.
27

28 We support legislation to require at least four farmers or ranchers, by occupation, to be
29 members of the Oklahoma Wildlife Conservation Commission.
30

31 We oppose the listing of species as an endangered or threatened species without
32 consideration to private property rights and without a study of the economic impact to the citizens
33 of the state of Oklahoma. We additionally oppose the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service critical habitat
34 rules for threatened species.
35

36 We support voluntary pro-active cooperative efforts by the private sector landowner to
37 restore potential threatened species by working with groups like the ODWC rather than a federal
38 regulatory approach which could be counterproductive.
39

40 We oppose the ODWC purchasing more land in the State of Oklahoma.
41

42 We encourage the ODWC studying the concept of leasing private land for use as a wildlife
43 public access area.
44

45 We oppose non-native wildlife species introduction in Oklahoma.
46

47 We encourage game rangers to conduct their duties in a professional and courteous manner
48 and to respect the landowner and their property rights.
49

50 Hunting licenses for the State of Oklahoma should have the following requirement printed
51 on the back of the form: "This license can be canceled if the holder violates the present law of

1 hunting or fishing on private property without permission from the owner, landlord or operator. It
2 is hereby understood that the owner of the property is not responsible for any accident or injury
3 sustained by persons entering land with or without permission."
4

5 We recommend that an unlimited number of deer, either sex, be taken in overpopulated areas.
6 Also, we support control of other wildlife species including geese, ducks, cattle egrets, feral hogs,
7 and elk on depredation of farmers' crops. We support the enforcement of legislation prohibiting
8 the deliberate release of swine to become feral hogs and agricultural producers' right to protect
9 crops, livestock and fences from elk in all Oklahoma counties.
10

11 We encourage the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food & Forestry (ODAFF) to test and
12 track deer and elk harvested for chronic wasting disease.
13

14 We oppose the legalization of the use of dogs in the process of hunting deer.
15

16 **ANIMAL WELFARE**

17
18 We oppose further laws or state questions, which would limit production agriculture by
19 imposing restrictions on traditional methods of producing swine, poultry, equine and cattle.
20

21 We urge our members to continue to educate the public on the fact that animals do not possess
22 the same "rights" as humans.
23
24

25 **PEST, WEED AND DISEASE CONTROL**

26
27 We support funding aggressive actions to prevent human, animal and plant diseases from
28 entering the United States. We support effective strategies for dealing with diseases, should these
29 enter the United States.
30

31 We urge immediate action to adequately fund a program to eradicate noxious plants
32 including, but not limited to, all species of mesquite and cedars from Oklahoma. Such a program
33 should include spraying of right-of-ways by federal, state and county agencies where needed.
34

35 In the event that castor beans have been produced prior to a ban, we support a one-year
36 moratorium on the production of other crops on the same location following prior year castor beans
37 production.
38

39 As a general farm organization representing producers with a variety of commodities, we
40 recognize the diversity of views regarding application of certain chemicals. Therefore we support
41 continued education and responsible use regarding the use of all herbicides and pesticides.
42

43 We encourage record-keeping and on-label usage of all crop enhancement products
44 (chemical applications) as a best management practice.
45

46 We encourage cooperation among agriculture stakeholders to provide education and training
47 for best management practices for pesticide storage, handling and application.
48

49 We encourage the Oklahoma Mesonet and/or the Oklahoma Dept. of Agriculture, Food &
50 Forestry (ODAFF) be provided funding to create and make available to producers adequate
51 climatic information for the application of herbicides, insecticides and burning.

1
2 We encourage implementation of an approved burn plan when doing prescribed burns and if
3 followed precisely, landowners should be provided some degree of liability protection. We
4 encourage educational programs to inform landowners of the proper way to develop and
5 implement a prescribed burn plan.

6
7 We support funding of a prescribed burn indemnity fund to be administered at the ODAFF.

8
9 Before an agricultural chemical can be removed from the market, factual evidence must be
10 obtained by the agency with jurisdiction that its use will adversely affect human and animal health
11 or that it is hazardous to the environment and the economic impact be considered when no
12 alternative exists.

13
14 We favor enforcement of the law requiring all harvesting equipment be thoroughly cleaned
15 prior to interstate travel.

16
17 We support the continued use of phostoxin as pest control in grain storage facilities, until a
18 suitable and affordable replacement is provided.

19
20 We urge continued support of the Oklahoma Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory and the
21 Oklahoma State University Center for Veterinary Health Sciences (OSU-CVHS).

22
23 Now that Oklahoma is a Brucellosis-free state, efforts must continue to ensure that we remain
24 Brucellosis-free.

25
26 We support a joint effort between OSU and ODAFF in requesting additional state and federal
27 funds for the control and eradication of ticks, fire ants, killer bees and parasitic mites in domestic
28 bees in Oklahoma.

29
30 We support the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS) area-
31 wide research efforts in Oklahoma and across the nation to control imported fire ants, using a
32 combination of treatment methods, including natural predators.

33
34 We urge the Oklahoma Legislature to continue to appropriate monies to provide for the
35 control and/or eradication of crows, blackbirds, skunks, prairie dogs, beavers, coyotes, raccoons,
36 feral hogs and other predatory animals in areas where they have become destructive or a menace
37 to crops and livestock.

38
39 We support ODAFF taking steps to control feral hogs, including the enforcement and
40 maintenance of feral hog free zones.

41
42 We support the right of a private property landowner to use whatever means possible by
43 permit during the Oklahoma growing season (Jan. 1 – Dec. 31) to protect any agricultural crop or
44 species of livestock of market value, and or processed feed, seed or other materials used in the
45 production of an agricultural commodity from depredation, damage or destruction by any nuisance
46 animal species. This provision includes but is not limited to feral hogs, raccoons, opossums,
47 armadillos, crows or any other animal recognized as a nuisance or posing a threat by joint
48 agreement with the Oklahoma Dept. of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) and ODAFF.

49
50 We urge the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to continue to support predator control and limit
51 any restrictive rule that affects the ability of the field men to do their work in predator control.

1
2 Farmers and ranchers should be allowed to control predators or varmints on their land by the
3 most effective, safe and economical means.
4

5 We recommend that any wildlife, or other exotic birds and animals transported to, within, or
6 through the State of Oklahoma, be certified by ODAFF to be free of infectious, contagious and
7 communicable diseases and/or parasites.
8

9 10 **AG RESEARCH AND EXTENSION**

11
12 We call for a minimum of one agricultural educator and one family and consumer science
13 educator in each county for continuing adult education for farmers, ranchers and homemakers. We
14 also encourage a strong 4-H club program in each county.
15

16 We support utilizing a citizen county, district and state advisory system as a means to provide
17 grassroots input to the leadership of the cooperative extension and research service.
18

19 We support a concerted effort to obtain adequate funding for Oklahoma State University
20 (OSU), the Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station (OAES) and the Oklahoma Cooperative
21 Extension Service (OCES) in every county.
22

23 We support developing a national clearinghouse for compiling and making available a
24 database with all agriculture research being conducted by state land-grant universities.
25

26 We support the GrazingLands Research Laboratory at Fort Reno and the Southern Plains
27 Research Lab in Woodward. This research in livestock grazing and erosion control is vital to
28 Southwest United States agriculture.
29

30 We support the funding of the Lane Agricultural Center and the cooperative efforts of OSU
31 and the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS) and its mission of
32 alternative crops research for the area. We additionally support expansion of the mission into bio-
33 fuels crops.
34

35 We support funding for the Expanded Wheat Pasture Research Unit at Oklahoma State
36 University.
37

38 We support state funding for the Oklahoma AgriAbility Project to be matched with federal
39 or private funding.
40

41 We encourage the Board of Regents to fully allocate all funds appropriated by the Legislature
42 to OSU and Cooperative Extension and Experiment Station.
43

1 **DEFINITIONS**

2
3 **A. HISTORICAL PARITY DEFINED:**

4
5 Congress has, by law, defined “fair” as the economic relationship that existed between
6 prices received by farmers and their production costs, including family living expenses, during
7 the five-year period 1910-1914.
8

9 The prices received by farmers are said to be at “100 percent of parity” (or “fairness”)
10 when they have the same relationship to production and living expenses as they did during that
11 period. The parity formula is kept up-to-date continuously, by:

12 (1) revising the list of services and items purchased by farmers for production and family
13 living to reflect today’s technology; and

14 (2) by adjusting the parity prices for each farm commodity to take into account the 10-year
15 moving average of changes that occur in the relationship to each other by the actual market
16 prices received by farmers for the respective commodities.
17

18 **B. FAMILY FARM DEFINED:**

19
20 Characteristically, a family farm is owned and operated by a farm family, with the family
21 providing the base of the labor needed for the farming operation, assuming the economic risk,
22 making most of the management decisions and depending on farming and/or ranching for a
23 significant portion of their living.
24