

2019 Maine Farm Bureau State Policies

Beef: Philosophy

1. **Beef Promotion Check-Off:** We recommend that all animals not sold for slaughter be exempt from the Beef Promotional Check-Off.

Blueberry: Philosophy

2. **Blueberry Grower Definition:** We favor classifying a blueberry grower as a farmer, not a processor.
3. **Blueberry Hill Research Farm:** We encourage the continued operation of the Maine Experiment Station Blueberry Research Farm in Jonesboro by redirecting its resources and emphasis from production to harvesting and marketing.
4. **Blueberry Insect Control:** We support all scientific efforts to produce insect-free blueberries.
5. **Wild Blueberry Commission:** We support equal representation on the Wild Blueberry Commission of independent growers and processors.
6. **Wild Blueberry Marketing:** We support the blueberry growers' advisory committee to work to expand markets and promote Maine wild blueberries.

Blueberry: Action Policy

7. **Blueberry Field Regulation:** We shall work with the blueberry industry in facing problems caused by the Pine Tree Legal and O.S.H.A.

Broadband: Philosophy

8. **Broadband Advocacy:** We resolve that access to broadband is critical to success in agriculture and that many of our members don't have that access. We also recognize that communities in Maine that have been successful in bringing access to their areas have been those that have coordinated their local efforts across multiple communities (Such as Baileyville and Calais and Franklin County). We resolve that our County Farm Bureaus need to advocate at their local levels and their efforts need to be coordinated and supported by new staff which could be funded by obtaining grant money to fund this initiative. (2019)

Commodities: Philosophy

9. **Agriculture Statistician:** We support and encourage the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) to employ an agriculture statistician. (2017)

10. **Cider – Definition:** Resolve that the definition of cider be changed to exclude shelf stable cider.
11. **Cooperative Marketing:** We support the cooperative marketing of farm products.
12. **Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry – Marketing:** We support encouraging a more productive and active Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. We support programs which promote the consumption of Maine-grown food within the State of Maine.
13. **Equine – Definition:** We favor changing the USDA definition of livestock to include equines. (2007)
14. **Food Labeling:** We favor placing the name and address rather than the plant number currently required by processors on food.
15. **Food Product Promotion:** We oppose the promotion of food products in any way that could cause consumers to question the safety or healthiness of any food product produced using best management practices. (2008)
16. **Genetic Agriculture:** We support genetic engineering used in agriculture. We also support a farmer’s choice whether to raise non-GMO or CMO crops. (2011)
17. **Hay Production:** We support allowing land in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to be harvested for hay in times of severe hay shortages. (2012)
18. **Hemp Production:** Maine Farm Bureau will support the growth and expansion of commercial Hemp production in Maine. (2018)
19. **Maine Agricultural Marketing and Bargaining Act:** We support the Maine Agricultural Marketing and Bargaining Act.
20. **Maple Syrup – USDA Definition:** We favor including maple syrup in the USDA definition for agriculture. (2007)
21. **Meat Processing Facility-Aroostook County:** We support strategies to establish or expand a local approved red meat processing facility that allows Aroostook County livestock farmers to increase their production in a way that benefits the farmer, processor and consumer. We support Aroostook County Farm Bureau President to designate an Aroostook board member as lead agent for business planning, grant writing and other necessary activities for the management and coordination of a red meat processing facility. (2012)
22. **Native Produce:** We favor the definition of “locally grown” or “native” to mean grown in Maine. (2009)

23. **Natural Resources Conservation Service Cost Share Programs:** We favor the funding for NRCS cost share programs. (1999)
24. **Organic Agriculture:** We support all agriculture, including organic agriculture. (2007)
25. **Plastic-Covered Greenhouses:** We favor the exemption of plastic-covered greenhouses from local building codes. (2004)
26. **USDA Non-Program Crops - Policy:** We feel policies for program crops should not be developed competing with non-program crops.

Commodities: Action Policy

27. **Farmers' Markets:** We will work with the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to establish more farmers' markets throughout the state to the benefit of consumers and farmers alike.
28. **Food Sovereignty:** Maine Farm Bureau should support an effort to repeal the Food Sovereignty law in the State of Maine. (2018)
29. **Grain Processing Facility Study:** Maine Farm Bureau supports introducing legislation in the 129th legislature directing DACF to study the feasibility of locating a grain processing facility in Southern Aroostook County. (2019)

Conservation: Philosophy

30. **Agricultural Irrigation – Land Use Planning Commission:** We will seek adjustments to the LUPC regulations to exempt irrigation for agricultural production in fields less than 50 acres. (2009)
31. **Conservation Districts:** We oppose any regulatory and legislative attempts to undermine the soil conservation districts and their mission of supplying technical assistance and research for Maine Agriculture.
32. **Conservation Plans:** We oppose having a conservation plan prepared and reviewed by the local SWCD Board being approved by DEP.
33. **Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service Merger:** We oppose the merger of the FSA and NRCS agencies. The financing and policing of programs should continue to be separated from the technical assistance that has been on a voluntary basis with land owners.
34. **Farm Service Agency Policies:** We oppose any plan to appoint FSA committeemen rather than the current practice of electing them.

35. **Farm Service Agency Programs:** We suggest that FSA structure its programs based on local needs.
36. **Ground Water Ownership:** We favor maintaining a landowner's ownership of groundwater. (2010)
37. **Natural Resource Conservation Service Accountability:** We support the integrity of the County NRCS and its local authority.
38. **Natural Resources Conservation Service Reporting:** We support the working partnership between Conservation Districts and NRCS field personnel. We oppose the immediate reporting by NRCS field personnel to the U.S. Army Corps for alleged violations of wetlands.
39. **Nutrient Management Jurisdiction:** We support the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry administering farm nutrient management plans. (1999)
40. **Nutrient Management Plans – Complaints:** We support rules that identifies the person making complaints on a farmer's nutrient management plan. (2002)
41. **Renewable Energy:** We support State of Maine policies that encourage renewable resources for energy. (2007)
42. **Water Use Reporting:** We oppose any legislation that will require farmers to register or to be taxed on personal or agricultural water use. (2002)

Cranberry: Philosophy

43. **Cranberry Development:** We support the cranberry industry in the State of Maine.
44. **Cranberry Support:** We favor the continued support and cooperation between the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry and the University of Maine in enhancing cranberry production.

Crop Protection: Philosophy

45. **Aerial Pesticide Application:** We support use of aerial pesticide application techniques within the guidelines of Best Management Practices.
46. **APHIS:** We support the continued APHIS testing in Maine. At such times the APHIS concludes the testing, we support turning the testing lab over to the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.
47. **Best Management Practices:** We recognize the importance of using Best Management Practices (BMPs) and encourage the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to oversee the implementation of BMPs.

48. **Board of Pesticides Control:** We favor the jurisdiction of the Board of Pesticides Control to remain with the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry.
49. **Chemical Crop Protection:** We appreciate that chemicals have and are making possible the abundant and relatively low priced food supplies available to consumer through both industry and agriculture.
50. **Deer Fencing Program:** We support the supplementation of the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife deer fencing program with money from the General Fund to whatever levels are necessary to continue this program.
51. **Food Quality Protection Act:** We favor requiring imported agricultural products into this country have the same FQPA standards as American agricultural products. (1999)
52. **Food Safety Modernization Act – Maine Program:** We favor a State of Maine official exemption from the FDA Food Safety Modernization Act and to create a Maine advisory committee of farmers and fishermen representatives and members of the Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry Committee to develop Maine food safety. (2014)
53. **Food Safety Modernization Act – Revision:** We favor revising the Food Safety Modernization Act so that family size operations can meet the requirements. (2014)
54. **Integrated Pest Management:** We support initiatives to provide integrated pest management research and education for agricultural crops in Maine.
55. **Pesticide Notification Registry:** We oppose the establishment of any pesticide notification registry that pertains to agricultural or forestry spraying. (2014)
56. **Pesticide Regulations:** State regulations of agricultural chemicals should not place Maine farmers at an economic disadvantage to producers in other states.
57. **Worker Protection Standards:** We favor that worker protection standards implemented by the Maine Pesticides Control Board not more restrictive than those set by the federal government.

Crop Protection: Action Policy

58. **Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) – Sustainability:** We shall pursue a Farm Bureau program for farmers to assure quality standards for food safety to the public. Best management practices and certification of quality standards by self-imposed rules must be economically sustainable. (2013)
59. **Good Agricultural Practices (GAP):** We will support the interests of farms from unduly restrictive GAP regulations and licensing fees and seek changes. (2014)
60. **Pesticide Drift:** We shall continue to have an active role in the regulation of pesticide drift ensuring it shall be reasonable and workable for farmers.

61. **Unlawful Cutting of Christmas Trees:** We shall request the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to adopt rules to administer the Unlawful Cutting of Trees law which requires an approval process, bonding and written permission prior to harvesting of trees by any person who has committed 2 violations of unlawful cutting of trees. (2015)

Dairy: Philosophy

62. **BST – Free Premium:** We support a premium price based on a scientific formula to be paid to producers who do not use synthetic BST.
63. **Cheese Labeling:** We support the use of “Real” seal on cheese and support programs to inform the public as to the difference between real and imitation cheese products.
64. **Commodity Credit Corporation Milk Tax:** We oppose the federal milk tax imposed by the CCC.
65. **Dairy – Casein:** We favor the listing of casein as a dairy product and a quota put on its importation. The Secretary of Agriculture in figuring the support price must subtract milk equivalent pounds of imported casein, cheese and all other dairy products and manufactured ingredients from total production of dairy products purchased by the CCC.
66. **Dairy – Competitive Pay Price:** We support efforts to reform the US Federal Order system for pricing milk and support the competitive pay price plan put forward by the Maine Dairy Industry Association. (2011)
67. **Dairy – Country of Origin:** We support the country of origin labeling on all dairy products. (2011)
68. **Dairy – Handling Fee:** We favor broadening the Maine Milk Handling Fee so that it applies to all dairy products. (2011)
69. **Dairy – Promotion Fees:** We are opposed to reimbursing the dairy promotion fees to foreign dairy imports. (2011)
70. **Dairy – Real Seal:** We support the Real Seal label to be used only on dairy products produced in the United States. (2011)
71. **Dairy – Whey Concentrates and Cheese Imports:** We favor legislation limiting the amount of whey concentrates and cheese imports into the United States. (2004)
72. **Dairy Policy - Federal:** We oppose any national dairy legislation limiting states rights to collect or pay any over order premiums on milk.
73. **Dairy Prices:** Maine Farm Bureau should work with MDIA and other state and regional organizations to adjust the formulas for dairy prices for more money to go back to farmers. (2018)

74. **Dairy Promotion – Rebuttals:** We support using dairy promotion money to be used to rebut inflammatory or misleading statements by the media.
75. **Dairy Promotion Board:** We fully support the Maine Dairy Promotion Board.
76. **Dairy Somatic Cell Count:** We favor lowering the federal maximum somatic cell count for dairy cow milk sold from 750,000/ml to 400,000/ml. (2010)
77. **Imitation Food Laws:** We support legislation protecting producers and consumers against imitation food products.
78. **Milk Additives:** We support action to allow the addition of whole milk solids and non-fat milk solids to fluid milk in Maine markets as well as the northeastern federal order markets.
79. **Milk Commission:** We support the basic authority of the Maine Milk Commission to establish minimum prices at the producer and consumer levels. (2002)
80. **Milk Control Program:** We favor a program to help farmers control purchasing and disposition of surplus milk and milk products.
81. **Milk Labeling:** We support legislation requiring the name of the processor and where it was processed on the container.
82. **Milk Orders -Federal:** We oppose the consolidation of Federal Milk Marketing Orders.
83. **Milk Pricing - On The Farm:** We oppose on the farm pricing of milk.
84. **Milk Pricing Components:** We support the component pricing of milk.
85. **Milk Solids:** We support action to increase milk solids requirements for fluid milk in Maine market as well as the northeastern federal order markets.
86. **Raw Milk Sales:** We support the continued sale of raw milk and the setting of uniform standards on its labeling and inspection. (1999)
87. **Real Seal:** We support the use of “Real” seal on all dairy products.
88. **School Lunch Program:** We recommend that all school lunch programs serve real cheese rather than imitation cheese products and offer both whole and low fat milk.

Dairy: Action Policy

89. **Dairy – Tier Program:** We support the Maine Dairy Stabilization “Tier” Program and support adequate funding necessary to sustain all dairy farms and Maine milk production to ensure the continuation of the Maine dairy industry and all the economic and social benefits it provides. We shall work to ensure it is adequately funded. (2013)

90. **Dairy – Milk Protein Concentrates (MPC):** Due to the unprecedented low producer prices, beginning with the U.S. Federal Order milk pricing programs and the danger of losing a critical mass of dairy producers within the state, as well as in the U.S. as a whole, we shall take action to discourage the imports of MPC through the following actions: (1) Investigate why MPCs come to the U.S. tariff-free. We support a tariff; (2) Require the same “on farm” inspection from country of origin as required of U.S. producers; and (3) Require the same rate of collection for dairy promotion fees as U.S. producers pay. (2011)
91. **Dairy Prices:** We will continue to support the Maine Dairy Industry Association’s efforts to establish fair producer prices for Maine’s dairy industry. (2004)
92. **Dairy Pricing:** Resolve that USDA will put forward a plan that allows the industry in every federal order to set the minimum price paid to producers in that order based on annual USDA cost of production figures for each order. Marketing boards comprised of producers with some co-op and processor representative shall be set up in each order completely independent of National Milk Producers Federation. Farms shall only market what the market will absorb at a cost of production price. Any further marketing would be at an export price or left on the farm. All producers small to large and mega shall be treated equitably. (2019)

Education: Philosophy

93. **Agriculture – Education:** Because of the urban background of much of the American public and the importance of agriculture to the history and the basic economics of providing food and fiber to this country, we feel that an understanding of production agriculture be included in the school curriculum in the State of Maine in grade K-12.
94. **Education - Life Skills:** We feel that our Maine secondary schools should initiate life skill courses such as home economics, consumer education and vocational courses. (2013)
95. **Education - On Farm Experience:** We promote and encourage more youth to work on the farm outside the classroom as part of their high school education. (2017)
96. **Educational Grants:** We feel the criteria used to award Basic Educational Opportunity Grants evaluation of financial worth of applicants should not discriminate against farm children because of the farm equity.
97. **New School Construction:** We favor prohibiting new school construction on productive farmland taken by eminent domain only. (2004)
98. **School Recess:** We support the continuation of the potato harvest recess for the purpose of teenager supplementation of the work force.
99. **School – Year Round:** We favor that any study effecting year-round schools include an impact on agriculture.

100. **School Year Length:** We favor allowing local school committees to vary the schedule of school years to fit the local situation.

Education: Action Policy

101. **Future Farmers of America:** We shall work with the Maine Department of Education to establish chapters of the National FFA Organization in high schools throughout Maine. (1999)

Energy: Philosophy

102. **Alternative Energy:** We support alternative and renewable farm energy initiatives. (2009)

103. **Current Use Taxation:** We shall submit legislation for the implementation of current use taxation on farm and forestland. The valuation of this farm and forestland will be based upon its ability to generate agricultural or forest income on a sustainable basis. (2017)

104. **Energy Audit:** We encourage our members to conduct energy audits and surveys to promote more energy efficient operation.

105. **Energy Taxation:** We oppose taxation of alternative forms of produced energy for heating or cooling for agricultural, horticultural and aquacultural practices. (2010)

106. **Ethanol Waiver:** We favor a waiver to the federal mandate requiring that gasoline contain ten percent ethanol. (2013)

107. **Hydro-Electric Power:** Hydro-electric power should be developed anywhere in the state that is economically feasible as long as it does not destroy large amounts of prime land.

108. **Net Metering:** We recommend leaving the solar rate (net metering) the same way they are currently. (2017)

Environment: Philosophy

109. **Agricultural Road Construction:** We favor the same standards for construction of roads in agricultural operations as forestry operations. (2011)

110. **Best Management Practices:** We support voluntary Best Management Practices.

111. **Code Enforcement Officer – Compliance:** We favor that all municipal code enforcement officers must follow the state guidelines with regard to the Right to Farm Law. (2012)

112. **DEP Permits Time Limit:** We favor a time limit on the DEP permit issuing process.

113. **Environmental Regulations – Loss of Farmland:** We are opposed to environmental regulations or zoning that takes existing farmland or prohibits previous farmland out of production. (2011)

114. **Environmental Regulations -Traditional and Historic Farmland:** We favor exemption of environmental regulations that denies, reduces, limits or prohibits sound agricultural practices when abandoned farms are returned to production. (2012)
115. **Environmental Regulations:** We believe that the state environmental regulations should not be more restrictive than those set by the federal government.
116. **Environmental Regulations:** We feel that the state and federal agencies handing down environmental regulations should be mandated by law from making decisions without compelling scientific evidence.
117. **Ground Water Liability:** Farmers using approved agricultural practices shall not be held liable for resulting ground water contaminations.
118. **Landspreading of Fish Scales:** We oppose the licensing of each individual farm and vendor for spreading organic fish scales for use as fertilizer. We favor the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, and not the DEP, administering the program. (1999)
119. **Liquid Manure:** We support the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to regulate the storage, transporting and spreading of liquid manure. (2008)
120. **LUPC and DEP Agricultural Regulations:** We favor the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry in regulating agricultural activities in LUPC and DEP jurisdictions. (2011)
121. **Returnable Bottle Law:** We favor the bottle bill law.
122. **Sludge:** We believe lime stabilized wastewater treatment sludge can be safely and beneficially applied to farmland using Best Management Practices. (1999)
123. **Sludge:** We support the spreading of paper sludge and wood ash on agricultural land.
124. **Water and Air Pollution:** Environmental controls and safety controls must not be pursued to the point of being an unnecessary deterrent for the production of food and fiber.
125. **Water Resources Council:** We favor the establishment of a Water Resources Council. (2013)

Environment: Action Policy

126. **Environmental Coalitions:** We will join with other natural resource based organizations and take all necessary steps to defend scientific agriculture and forestry.

Equipment Education and Safety: Action Policy

127. **ROPS (Rollover Protection Structure) program funding:** We support legislation to create state based funding for the National ROPS (Rollover Protection Structure) Rebate Program. (2018)

Forestry: Philosophy

128. **American Chestnut:** We support efforts to restore the American Chestnut tree.
129. **Certified Logger Program:** We favor exempting landowners harvesting wood on their own land from the CLP requirements when selling wood to commercial buyers. (2002)
130. **Consultant Foresters – Financial Assistance:** We support continued assistance to hire foresters to establish forest plans on small wood lots and farms.
131. **Forestry – Biomass Production:** We support the harvest of wood for biomass provided it is done in such a manner to improve the value of the forest stand and not harvested primarily for the production of biomass except when the land is being clear cut for a silviculture purpose or for other cleared land purposes.
132. **Forestry – Tree Growing Stock:** We encourage the development of genetically improved varieties of forest trees to improve the quality of the growing stock in our producing forests.
133. **Forest Pests:** We favor action to prevent the introduction of the Asian longhorn beetle in Maine. (2009)
134. **State Forestry Program:** We urge that the Maine Forest Service provide professional education in forest management, utilization, and marketing by having sufficient manpower to work with the individual forest landowners and support legislation to this effect.
135. **Tree Removal:** We favor allowing a farmer to remove and process trees without penalty if they are incidental to the crop being produced. (2009)

Government (State &National): Philosophy

136. **Agri-Tourism:** RESOLVED that MFB work with municipalities to craft ordinances as they relate to agri-tourism in municipalities. (2018)
137. **Air National Guard Low-altitude Flights:** We oppose the change to Condor flight space levels from 7,000’ to 500’ in military operation areas used for training proposed for portions of Franklin, Oxford, Piscataquis and Somerset counties. (2010)
138. **Best Management Practices:** Best management practices should be considered optional guidelines, and not from the basis for additional regulations for farmers. (2003)
139. **Broadband:** The Maine Farm Bureau supports LD1399 (“An Act To Encourage Broadband Coverage in Rural Maine”/Connect Maine) and bond issues that are related. (2018)

140. **Checks and Balances:** We believe in a representative government holding high the idea of necessary checks and balances on executive and administrative action as a means of protecting the rights and influences of the individual citizens.
141. **Commercial Kitchen License:** Bee keepers that sell 100 pounds or less of honey should be exempt from a Commercial Kitchen License. (2016)
142. **Constitutional Amendment -- Direct Initiative of Legislation:** "We resolve that the Maine Farm Bureau support legislation (H.P. 32)(LD 31) proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the State of Maine to require that signatures on a "Direct Initiative of Legislation" (Petition of Referendum) come from each Congressional District." (2018)
143. **Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry – Structure –Fresh Water Aquaculture:** We favor moving fresh water aquaculture services from the Department of Marine Resources to the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. (2017)
144. **Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry - Testimony:** The Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry should represent agricultural interests on all agricultural legislation at committee hearings to ensure agriculture is represented.
145. **Endangered Species Listings:** We feel all natural resource agencies and commissions that classify and/or determine a special or critical habitat for any flora or fauna shall (1) notify the landowner of record for the impending listing; (2) conduct a public hearing which shall contain an economic impact study of the affected area and not on an assumed potential habitat; and (3) be based on an actual study of the affected area and not on an assumed potential habitat. (2015)
146. **Endangered Species:** We believe the economic cost to the landowner and to society should be considered in the imposition of measures to protect endangered species.
147. **Federal Balanced Budget:** We favor a balanced budget by a reduction of federal spending.
148. **Government Purchasing:** We support that all Maine state agencies, whenever possible, should purchase American made products. (2008)
149. **High-speed Internet Service:** We feel that any residence or business that is served by electrical or phone service should have high-speed Internet service as well. (2009)
150. **Interstate Commerce Definition:** We favor clarifying the definition of interstate commerce to not include the method of payment, method of sale, origin of inputs or origin of packaging, and only involve the current transaction. (2015)
151. **Interstate Shipment of Meat:** We favor allowing states to enter into Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) to allow the sale of state inspected meat into other states. (2012)
152. **Insurance:** WHEREAS a recent executive order regarding professional groups purchasing insurance across state lines has been signed/enacted (EO signed 10/12/2017 Promoting Health

Care Choice Across the United States) we encourage Maine Farm Bureau to explore the opportunities that poses for both Maine Farm Bureau and American Farm Bureau. (2018)

153. **Insurance:** Maine Farm Bureau should investigate the possibility of buying health insurance across state lines and/or pursue the establishment of an American Farm Bureau insurance nationally. (2018)
154. **Law 1913:** We shall submit legislation to reinstate 1913 A Subsection J. to again allow for temporary signage in right of way for seasonal produce. (2017)
155. **Maine Legislature – Size:** We oppose efforts to reduce the size of the Maine Legislature.
156. **Maine-Federal Cooperative Agreements:** We favor that the cooperative agreements between the state of Maine and the federal government be identical to ensure the interests of Maine farmers selling products interstate. (2014)
157. **Natural Resources Constitutional Amendment:** We favor a Maine constitutional amendment that will protect the rights of farmers, fishermen, and other natural resources producers from any law prohibiting best management practices. (2012)
158. **Term Limits:** We oppose term limit restriction on Maine legislators. (2001)
159. **USDA Stakeholder Committee:** We favor the creation of a stakeholder committee of farmers and processors to identify issues/barriers and opportunities for small and midsize producers and processors of meat and poultry. (2012)

Government (State and National): Action Policy

160. **Added Sugar Labeling:** Maine Farm Bureau supports a statute that single-ingredient sugars of pure honey and pure maple syrup be exempt from “added sugar” labeling requirements. (2019)
161. **Connect Maine Authority:** We shall submit legislation increasing the appropriation for Connect Maine from 1 million dollars per year to 5 million dollars per year in order to provide essential high speed internet for rural Maine. (2015)
162. **Credit Card Transactions:** We support legislation at the federal level that exempts farms from interstate commerce, pertaining to credit card sales. (2017)
163. **Constitutional Amendment -- Direct Initiative of Legislation:** The Maine Farm Bureau will support efforts to make sure that citizen referendums reflect state wide support (2018)
164. **Definition of Milk:** Maine Farm Bureau supports FDA enforcement of the definition of milk. (2019)
165. **Drone Use:** We support amending the statute governing the right to farm law, as it relates to the regulation of the use of drones. (2016)

166. **Interstate Agricultural Trade:** We recommend that a 20 mile exclusion be created along State lines to allow Un-permitted agricultural trade across State lines. (2019)
167. **Maine Department of Agriculture:** Maine Farm Bureau will initiate legislation to separate Agriculture from the State of Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. (2019)
168. **Property Posting Sign:** We shall sponsor legislation that requires the commissioner to issue a one year suspension of hunting privileges for anyone defacing or destroying a property posting sign. (2016)
169. **Right to Farm Law:** Maine Farm Bureau supports an amendment to the state Right to Farm law to say that municipalities cannot enact ordinances more restrictive than state Right to Farm law. (2019)
170. **Saltwater and Freshwater Aquaculture Regulatory Jurisdiction:** We shall introduce legislation making saltwater and fresh water aquaculture regulated by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. (2015)
171. **Temporary Road Signs:** To amend the law regarding temporary road sign restriction dates to be used while products are availability throughout the year. (2016)
172. **United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA):** To support legislation that directs the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry to prepare an impact statement to Maine agricultural producers as the new Mexico, USA, Canada Trade Agreement affects them (who are the winners and losers). (2019)

Government Lending: Philosophy

173. **Commercial Development:** We oppose Farm Service Agency financing of commercial development on prime agricultural land.
174. **Committee Designation:** Maine Farm Bureau will support an effort to ensure that all bills affecting agriculture are heard before the Joint Standing Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry. (2018)
175. **Farm Credit System:** We support the continuation of a Farm Credit System that maintains local control participation with a regional bank structure to be responsive to the diversified needs of agriculture.
176. **Farm Loans:** We oppose Farm Service Agency and Farm Credit write down of farm loans that creates allow unfair competition with proven successful farmers.
177. **Farm Service Agency – Marketing Plan:** We feel the government lending agencies should have criteria that require every applicant to have a marketing plan as a prerequisite for the loan.

178. **Farm Service Agency – Program Payments:** We urge that FSA, after a program is established, not change the rules of that program such that payments already disbursed must be returned to FSA by agricultural producers.
179. **Government Lending – Red Tagging:** We oppose the use of “Red Tagging” farms by governmental services.

Hunting: Philosophy

180. **District 27:** To urge the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife to institute a number of doe permits in wildlife management district 27 or re-district for the 2018 deer season to protect agricultural production. (2017)
181. **Doe Hunting Permits:** We favor that any farmer with more than five (5) contiguous acres used for agricultural purposes does not need to have a doe hunting permit to shoot non-antlered deer on his own land.
182. **Game Animals:** We oppose the releasing of game animals on farm land without the advanced approval of the landowner. (2009)
183. **Sunday Hunting:** We oppose Sunday hunting.
184. **Trapping:** We support trapping of animals in Maine. (2007)
185. **Turkey Bag Limit:** Resolve to increase turkey bag limit. (2019)
186. **Wolves Reintroduction:** We oppose the reintroduction of wolves in Maine. (1999)

Imports, Exports, & Trade National Affairs: Philosophy

187. **Fair Trade Policy:** We favor fair trade rather than free trade.
188. **Imported Standards:** We recommend that all imported agricultural products, at point of entry be subject to the same inspection, sanitary, quality, labeling and residue standards as domestic products.
189. **North American Free Trade Agreement:** We oppose the concept of the North American Free Trade Agreement in its present form as long as Canadian agriculture is exempt.
190. **North American Free Trade Agreement:** American Farm Bureau Federation to review the NAFTA agreement as it impacts the agricultural segments of Maine including the forest products industry. The NAFTA agreement impact report to be presented to members of Congress. (2018)
191. **Tariff:** We support the establishment of economic parity for American and foreign Agricultural and forestry products competing in American and foreign markets.

192. **Trade Imbalance:** We support and will work with the Maine Potato Board and other organizations to propose trade remedies with Maine’s Congressional delegation for legislation to correct the trade imbalance between Canada and the U.S.
193. **Trade Issues – Money Exchange:** We recommend that the appropriate U.S. agencies and trade negotiator take into consideration the difference in monies between countries in all future trade negotiations as long as Canadian agriculture is exempt.
194. **Trade Negotiations – Dairy:** The U.S. Government should protect the U.S. dairy industry from subsidized dairy imports.

Inspection & Grading Standards: Philosophy

195. **Agriculture Products Standards:** We believe that any standards imposed on Maine produced agricultural products should also apply to all agricultural products sold in Maine.
196. **Farmers’ Market Inspection:** We favor better enforcement of the “native” produce law by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry at farmers’ markets. (2008)
197. **Marketplace Inspection:** We support efforts to enforce quality control standards at the marketplace, such as cleanliness of displays and appropriately low storage temperatures for dairy product, meat, and eggs.

Insurance: Action

198. **Insurance Plan:** In collaboration with AFBF, explore all options for creating an insurance plan for farm bureau members. (2019)

Insurance: Philosophy

199. **Mandatory Health Insurance:** We oppose employers bearing the cost of mandatory health insurance for their employees.
200. **Medicare:** We support legislative changes to Medicare to include preventative examinations to be included as part of reimbursable expenses. (2007)
201. **Workers’ Compensation – Ag. Exemption:** We support the continuation of the six worker exemptions for agricultural employers in the Workers’ Compensation law.
202. **Workers’ Compensation Reform:** We support continued reform of the Workers’ Compensation system so that it be affordable and comparable to other agricultural production states.

Labor: Philosophy

203. **Foreign Labor:** We support the use of foreign workers for harvesting apples, potatoes, or other crops in the absence of willing domestic workers.
204. **Labor Strikes:** We oppose labor strikes that affect the movement of farm products to the market place.
205. **Minimum Wage Legislation:** Application of a minimum wage law in agriculture under circumstances in which substantial prerequisites, family employment, irregular hours, minimum supervision, and piece work rates are common practices, involve great complexities of application and administration. For these and other reasons, we are strongly opposed to the extension of minimum wage to Maine agriculture through state legislation.
206. **Seasonal Foreign Labor:** We favor modification of the requirements for seasonal foreign workers to fit the needs of labor-intensive agriculture.
207. **Unfair Trade Practice Act:** We oppose the discrimination by dealers because of producer's membership in certain organizations.
208. **Unemployment Compensation:** We favor Unemployment Compensation exemption for agricultural employees. We favor increasing the threshold level of agricultural coverage from the \$20,000 of wages paid in any calendar quarter to \$60,000 to reflect wage inflation that has occurred since the enactment of the agricultural coverage. This exemption should be adjusted annually on January 1 of each year, according to the rate of inflation. (2013)
209. **H2A:** We favor legislation requiring that the H2A program Adverse Effect Wage rate should only take effect when there is evidence of a significant effect on local employment.
210. **Tractor Safety:** We encourage tractor safety courses.
211. **Working Minors:** We believe the rights of minors to work should be protected. Continued attempts to remove them from the labor market are not in the best interest of our society.
212. **Working Minors – Supervision:** We are opposed to having adult supervision as a requirement for the employment of youth under the age of 18 working on farms. (2011)
213. **Mandatory Sick Leave:** We are opposed to employers mandated to provide sick leave for employees. (2010)
214. **Youth Wage:** We support that Maine develop a lower minimum wage for youth. (2019)

Labor: Action

215. **Labor Laws:** We will support legislation at the federal level to exempt farm workers from current wage and hour laws. (2017)

216. **Workforce Development and Safety:** Maine Farm Bureau recognizes the need for workforce development for agricultural skills and safety in the State of Maine and will support legislation that supports this need. (2017)

Laws: Philosophy

217. **All-Terrain Vehicles:** We recommend that laws concerning ATVs should be more strictly enforced, and registration fees raised should go toward enforcement.
218. **ATV – Discontinued Roads:** We believe that towns should not authorize ATV use on discontinued town roads. If the town does not want to maintain such roads for public use, it should not expect landowners to repair damage to them caused by ATV use. (2003)
219. **ATV – Landowner Permission:** We favor that all ATV drivers must receive a landowner’s written permission to operate the vehicle on that landowner’s property.
220. **Citizen Suits:** We oppose citizens’ suits for alleged agricultural environmental violations.

Livestock and Poultry Care: Philosophy

221. **Alpaca and Llama:** We recognize the growing importance of alpaca and llama fleece in agricultural production. (2008)
222. **Animal Welfare:** We support animal welfare laws as long as they do not prohibit usual and customary activities with regard to farm animals and sound agricultural practices.
223. **Equine Slaughtering Facility:** We favor the establishment of humane equine slaughter facilities in the United States. (2009)
224. **Equine Standards of Care:** We favor the standards of care for equines to include the condition of the equine using the body condition score, based on 1983 Henneke Score developed at Texas A&M, in all abuse and neglect cases. (2012)
225. **Law 3972:** Repeal law number 3972; It is unlawful to sell, display, raffle, giving away, offer for sale, to the public, any live fowl, turtle or rabbit under 8 weeks of age, in lots of less than six. (2016)
226. **Livestock – Best Management Practices:** We favor the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry to work with livestock producers in establishing livestock best management practices. (2009)
227. **Livestock and Crop Damage:** We support legislation directing the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife in finding effective means for controlling domestic and wildlife that damage livestock and crops. Farmers should be able to take whatever prudent measures are necessary to protect their crops and livestock from wildlife damage. (2000)

228. **Livestock Composting – Regulations:** We favor that the enforcement of regulations affecting the composting of livestock offal fall under the jurisdiction of the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, not the Maine Department of Environmental Protection. (2002)
229. **Livestock Composting:** We support research by the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry on composting of livestock carcasses and rendering by-products. (2002)
230. **Livestock Damage Reimbursement:** We are concerned with the loss of farm animals as a result of wild animal attacks within the State of Maine. We support legislation to provide reimbursement to the farmer of animals lost.
231. **Rabies Vaccine:** We favor the livestock owner to be able to administer rabies vaccine to livestock. (2013)
232. **Transportation of Equines:** We are opposed to legislation which will criminalize the sale and transportation of horses for the purpose of slaughter.

Livestock and Poultry Care: Action Policy

233. **Dogs in Agriculture:** Maine Farm Bureau will propose amending the legislation Chapter 719, P3911 Dogs at Large (Maine Leash Law) to include dogs in agricultural service to the exemption allowed for hunting dogs. (2018)
234. **Equine Best Management Practices (BMPs):** We request the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry with input from Maine Farm Bureau, Maine Cooperative Extension and equine organizations to develop BMPs for equines. (2012)
235. **Municipal Holding of Abandoned Livestock:** Maine Farm Bureau supports the rule change as proposed by the Animal Welfare Board of the Department of Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry to adjust the number of days for which a municipality must hold abandoned livestock to 10 days. (2019)

Organization: Philosophy

236. **Email Use:** Resolved that the Maine Farm Bureau encourage each Maine Farm Bureau member who can, to provide an electronic mailing address; and that those members' only receiving mailings electronically. Each January, the Maine Farm Bureau state office will do a mailing to those members not currently on the electronic communication list to request that the member provide an electronic address. (2016)
237. **Farm Bureau Building:** Maine Farm Bureau will derive as much income from vacant space in the Farm Bureau building as possible without impacting Maine Farm Bureau operations. (2019)
238. **Farm Bureau Mission:** We reaffirm the primary purpose of Maine Farm Bureau is the legislative advocacy for its members. (2013)

239. **Governing Document Review:** Whereas, it is 2017 and Maine is home to amazing contributors to Farm Bureau, be it proposed the policy book be reviewed and corrected to use language more inclusive and not gender specific to reflect the entire membership. (2018)
240. **Marketing Campaign:** We recommend that the Maine Farm Bureau (MFB) develop a statewide marketing campaign focused on education about the Farm Bureau, in order to attract young farmers, retain existing members and recruit new ones. (2017)
241. **Member information:** Maine Farm Bureau should encourage the compilation of farming information to have an effective narrative in legislature. Specifically in regard to acres owned, portion is farmed and is forested. (2016)
242. **Organization Office:** Maine Farm Bureau will implement human resource policies as they relate to jobs and performance. (2019)
243. **Organization Partnership:** Encourage Maine Farm Bureau to engage in events and build larger legislative backing with organizations that seek to advance the profitability and viability of agriculture in Maine. (2016, revised 2019)
244. **Organization Relationships:** Maine Farm Bureau officers and members will demonstrate respect for employees and each other, and will not use a position of power to unduly influence or pressure staff or other members. (2019)
245. **Political Action Committee:** We oppose any Farm Bureau P.A.C.S. on the state and federal levels.
246. **Veterans Committee:** Maine Farm Bureau Board of Directors will establish a Maine Military Veterans Farm Bureau Committee consisting of Maine Military Veteran Farmers. (as per MFB policy each member of the committee will hold an individual membership with Maine Farm Bureau) (2018)

Organization: Action Policy

247. **Agricultural Policy Platform:** The Maine Farm Bureau will take an official and active role in the Agricultural Policy Platform's ongoing policy effort. (2019)
248. **Annual Meeting:** Be it resolved that all county Farm Bureaus host the Annual State Farm Bureau meeting either by alphabetical order or the earliest to the latest establishment of the 12 county farm bureaus commencing in 2019. (2018)
249. **Bylaw Review:** MFB board of directors will appoint a committee to review and study the MFB bylaws and report back to the voting delegates prior to the annual meeting in 2019 with any changes or updates that need to be made. (2018)

250. **Farm Bureau Funding Sources – Private foundations:** Maine Farm Bureau shall leverage its non-profit status to access funding from private foundations to be used for: create visibility for the work of Farm Bureau and the significant contribution Farm Bureau member farms make to the local, regional, national and international food systems; build memberships; position Farm Bureau to attract younger members; and cover operational costs as possible based on foundations funding criteria. (2013)
251. **Farm Bureau Membership – Young Farmers:** We shall offer a one year free membership to any young farmer. (2013)
252. **Legal Digest:** Be it resolved that mailings of the Legislative Digest, listed by the Maine Farm Bureau as a direct member benefit, be paid for by the State Office, and not charged to the County Bureaus. (2016)
253. **Legislative Reporting:** Maine Farm Bureau should work with other natural resource groups to create a ranking for legislators. (2018)
254. **Organizational Vitality:** Maine Farm Bureau officers and board will seek to build a strong, relevant and enduring organization through investment in resources to create visibility for Maine Farm Bureau, the county farm bureaus and its members and to ensure a strong voice for Maine’s agriculture locally, statewide and nationally. (2019)
255. **Public Relations – Farm Bureau:** Maine Farm Bureau shall increase efforts in public relations with the media and public to promote a good image of Maine agriculture and present the farm view on agricultural issues.
256. **State Legislators Voting Records:** We shall educate our members on voting records of state legislators. (2017)

Potato: Philosophy

257. **Agricultural Bargaining Council:** We support the Agricultural Bargaining Council in its efforts at working for Maine potato growers.
258. **Canadian Subsidies:** We recommend that the National Potato Council and the American Farm Bureau continue to pursue an equitable and effective solution to trade problems (subsidies and non-tariff barriers used by the Canadian government) to restore stability to the potato markets.
259. **Government Pay - Potatoes:** We support ten day pay by the produce industry and government procurement agencies.
260. **Potato – Maine Bag Program:** We favor that all efforts for a Federal-State Marketing Order should be directed at the expansion of the Maine Bag Program.
261. **Potato – Maine Bag Program:** We support continuation of the Maine Bag Program and the inspection subsidy for using the program.

262. **Potato Assessment Audit:** We support an audit of grower deliveries to potato processing facilities in order to assure that bargaining associations receive their proper assessment.
263. **Potato Board Advertising:** We support the use of advertising money from the Maine Potato Board to educate both the trade and the consumer on the benefits of the Maine Bag Program.
264. **Potato Farmgate Price:** We support the use of farmgate prices rather than prices received by farmers in the economic reports of the USDA so as to more accurately reflect net return to the producer.
265. **Potato Inspection - Grievance Committee:** We support the establishment of a Grievance Committee for the inspection service which will be representatively elected from all segments of the potato industry (table-seed-processors-sales-etc.) and serving with definite terms, duties and powers.
266. **Potato Inspection Schedule:** We support split shifts and staggered days off for inspection service to alleviate problems caused by overtime (Saturday and holidays) which interfere with normal packing scheduling.
267. **Potato Inspection Service:** We support that the potato inspection service, either public or private, must remain a service and not be used to enforce or police any mandatory rule.
268. **Potato Inspection:** Producers who market only to retail outlets will only be required to have only one monthly inspection. The producer would furnish the inspector all dates of each month that potatoes would be packed for market. This would allow the inspector to make an unannounced inspection.
269. **Potato Inspection:** Recognizing the need for inexpensive inspection service for the potato industry, we recommend the Commissioner of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry proceed to license private inspectors to encourage quality control at the least possible cost.
270. **Potato Licensing:** We oppose the concept of licensing producers to grow, pack, market and/or procure shipment of their own products.
271. **Potato Marketing Improvement Fund Program:** We support increasing the state guarantee for the Potato Marketing Improvement Funding Program at 90%.
272. **Potato Off-Grades:** We support establishment of industries which can use off-grade potatoes as a raw product.
273. **Potato Plant Breeding Program:** We support the continued State funding for the plant breeding program at the Aroostook Research Farm on a ratio of fifty percent from each the state and university.
274. **Potato Pricing Information:** We support effective and understandable pricing information relating to potatoes by modification of Market News Service to report grower selling price, and/or establishing an industry operated price suggesting board.

275. **Potato Quality Control:** We support additional quality control only on those “Maine” potatoes packed in consumer bags bearing the word Maine anywhere except the small print of the address of the packer or shipper. We support at least spot quality checks by Federal-State Inspection Service, or approved inspection service on these “Maine” bags to be imposed at the beginning of a marketing season and not changed during the season.
276. **Potato Research Change:** We favor notification prior to any personnel and/or program changes which could materially affect the direction of existing research programs or the establishment of new programs in potato research.
277. **Potato Seed Program:** We support all reasonable and prudent measures to ensure the survival and viability of the Maine seed potato industry.

Poultry: Philosophy

278. **Poultry Disease - Newcastle:** Newcastle Disease control is of deep concern to the state poultry industry. We favor a more strict control of the importation of exotic birds which are not subject to inspection and can cause out-break of this disease. We support an education program to inform pet dealers of the symptoms of this diseases and the devastating effect the disease could have on the poultry industry.
279. **Poultry:** We favor the development and revitalization of Maine’s poultry industry.
280. **Poultry Processing:** We favor allowing an exemption for poultry processing facilities of less than 20,000 birds annually to be able to lease to other processors who have an HACCP plan and are processing their own birds. (2012)
281. **Poultry Promotion:** We will work to encourage the promotion and marketing of Maine poultry products and eggs.

Property Rights: Philosophy

282. **DEP Land Access:** We favor any action that will make it harder for the Department of Environmental Protection to access private property. (2012)
283. **Eminent Domain -Public/Private Projects:** We oppose any private or public/private use of eminent domain to be allowed to complete a project. (2015)
284. **Eminent Domain:** The taking of property or easements from property owners should be permitted only when there is a clear-cut need for the betterment of the public good and the completion of the project is guaranteed. In cases where private property is taken, we support prompt, just and adequate compensation.
285. **Farmer’s Curtilage:** We favor a farmer’s curtilage to include his or her land. (2012)

286. **Farmland and Recreation:** We recognize the advantages of use of private farmland for recreational purposes. This use is being limited by posting due to damage done to property by certain careless persons; therefore, we shall support legislation for stiff penalties for such property damage. We will work closely with snowmobile clubs, and others involved to seek methods to reduce incidents of damage to farm property and help solve other problems. Much farmland is available to the enjoyment of citizens who wish to hunt, fish, snowmobile, and indulge in other forms of recreation. The farm owner is entitled to the fullest authorized support of law enforcement by officers and by the court.
287. **Farmland Buffer Zones:** We support that buffer zones for identified preserved crops must be maintained by the farmer that grows that crop. (2008)
288. **Farmland Preservation – Leasing of Development Rights:** We support the lease-type/incremental purchase of development rights. (2000)
289. **Farmland Preservation – Purchase of Development Rights Time Limit:** We support placing a 20-year limit on the purchase of development rights. (2013)
290. **Farmland Preservation – Purchase of Development Rights:** We support the purchase of farmland development rights by the state.
291. **Farmland Preservation:** Because of the many differences in the state due to development pressures, soil types, climate, economic conditions and others, it will be very difficult to have a farmland protection program that will meet the needs of the entire state. It may be more beneficial to have farmland protection programs based on different regions of the state. The study of farmland protection should be never ending.
292. **Land Use:** We oppose the taking of land out of production for the preservation of endangered or threatened species without just compensation for this reduction of productivity. We urge legislation requiring monetary compensation to agricultural producers from any legal entity where laws or restrictions imposed by that entity prohibit a producer's use of agricultural land, provided such is consistent with generally accepted farming practices. Such compensation shall be commensurate with the producer's loss. We believe that the farmer is in the best position to judge the proper use of his own land; therefore, oppose land use management and environmental legislation that could control or restrict his agricultural enterprise.
293. **Landowner Management:** We oppose any efforts to restrict the rights of landowners to make agricultural or forest land management decisions. (1999)
294. **Municipal Planning Board Representation:** We urge that the planning board of any municipality should be composed of members adequately representing all local interests including agriculture.
295. **North Woods National Park:** We oppose the North Woods National Park as proposed by Restore: The North Woods. (2001)

- 296. **Private Property Rights - Compensation:** We oppose any legislation that will reduce the resale or use value of property without just compensation.
- 297. **Private Property Rights:** We favor any legislation that protects or increases private property rights. (2012)
- 298. **Real Estate Disclosure:** We favor legislation requiring real estate brokers to tell prospective buyers of land which is abutting working farms. (2009)
- 299. **Recreational Fees:** We favor the concept of charging a fee for access to private land. (2009)
- 300. **Signless Posting:** We support signless posting.
- 301. **Trespass Fines:** We favor increasing the trespass fines on legally posted roads to a level which will discourage it. (2009)
- 302. **Zoning:** We oppose state of Maine zoning of Maine farmland.

Property Rights: Action Policy

- 303. **Drones:** We shall submit legislation requiring landowner permission for any aerial surveillance by drones. (2016)
- 304. **Harvesting in Coastal Intertidal Zone:** MFB will support efforts to assure that plant material growing on rocks or soil in the Coastal Intertidal Zone (including seaweed) is considered the property of the adjacent landowner and may not be harvested without landowner permission. (2018)
- 305. **Landowner Compensation:** We shall sponsor legislation to compensate landowners for property value lost to future regulatory takings. The legislation must provide for: (1) complete, not partial reimbursement for lost value; (2) lost value to be determined by a licensed independent appraiser; and (3) reimbursement exemptions for past regulatory takings: regulations involving public nuisances, health and safety; and regulations mandated by federal law or local ordinances. (2013)
- 306. **Recreation Incentives:** We will work diligently to ensure that landowners receive a share of the nearly \$1.5 billion generated in Maine each year from state licensed recreational activities. (2009)

Public Relations: Philosophy

- 307. **Agricultural Fairs:** We favor the continued support of an agricultural focus at the state's agricultural fairs. (2011)
- 308. **Food Hunger in Maine:** We will support programs ending food hunger in Maine. (2011)

Public Relations: Action Policy

- 309. **Agriforestry – Public Relations:** We shall work with small woodlot owners on agriforestry issues to get more media exposure and coverage. (2003)
- 310. **Media Information:** We will, whenever appropriate, respond to negative publicity in the media concerning agriculture.

Taxation: Philosophy

- 311. **Bio-fuel:** We support agricultural bio-product processing facilities where farmers can grow these crops for bio fuels. (2007)
- 312. **Capital Gains:** We support Capital Gains and Investment Credit Treatment for Agriculture.
- 313. **Commodity Taxes:** We support special commodity taxes if approved by respective commodity groups. We favor legislation which will require processors or buyers of certain agricultural products to deduct marketing association dues from funds due producers when this is voluntarily authorized by the producer member.
- 314. **Estate Tax Reform:** We oppose any attempt to repeal the recently passed estate tax reform. (2013)
- 315. **Estate Transfers:** We support legislation which facilitates transfer of the ownership on agricultural enterprises, such as non-family ownership transfer.
- 316. **Excise Tax:** We favor the excise tax on vehicles be based on the purchase price and not the sticker price or the suggested list price. (2010)
- 317. **Farm and Open Space – Public Access:** We oppose mandatory public access for qualification for enrollment to the Farm and Open Space and Tree Growth Tax Law.
- 318. **Farm and Open Space Tax Reimbursements:** We support legislation to reimburse municipalities for tax revenues lost on land placed in the Farm and Open Space Tax program. (2000)
- 319. **Farm Truck – Registration:** We favor farm trucks greater than five years of age, used solely for agricultural seasonal purposes, be charged a minimal excise tax of not more than \$50 per year. (2007)
- 320. **Farm Truck Registration – Fleet Rates:** We favor a fleet farm truck registration rate.
- 321. **Health Insurance Premiums:** We favor health insurance premiums be tax deductible for farmers.

322. **Maine Revenue Services – Court Decisions:** We favor legislation mandating MRS to pay court costs and attorney fees to the plaintiff in a court decision against MRS. (2011)
323. **Maine’s Personal Property Tax:** We will urges the governor and Maine State Legislature to work to repeal this unfair – and often poorly administered. (2017)
324. **Property Tax – House Lots:** We oppose property not accessible by maintained roads be taxed as house lots. (1998)
325. **Property Tax Policy:** We support a property tax based on the property’s value for current use.
326. **Sales Tax Exemption-Heating Oil:** We favor a sales tax exemption on heating oil used in agricultural production. (2011)
327. **Social Security Deductions:** We favor Social Security legislation raising the mandatory deduction earning level from \$150 minimum to \$1,500 and the minimum days worked requirement should be changed to 90 days. We favor an exemption for all employees under 18 years of age.
328. **State Valuation:** If we continue to use the state’s method of valuation, a new economic formula should be developed to compute the valuation of organized towns. This formula should place major emphasis on current use value of taxable property within the town instead of using recent sales values which are usually inflated.
329. **State Valuation-Exempt Property:** We favor that any land of a town classified or enrolled in land conservation easements, land trusts, tree growth, farm and open space or any other exempt or partially exempt entity from property tax including town, county, state, federal or tribal lands shall have its true valuation deducted from valuation determined by the official tax assessment. (2014)
330. **Storage Structure Assessments:** We support legislation that will exempt roof-less farm storage structure and all manure handling facilities from municipal assessments.
331. **Tax Reform-Income Averaging:** We support income averaging and expensing of preproduction costs.
332. **Tax Relief:** We support economy in government at the local, state and national level. Unnecessary services should be eliminated. Tax relief should be the goal of government rather than the expansion of existing programs and adoption of new ones.
333. **Timber Severance Tax:** We oppose a timber severance tax.
334. **Tree Growth:** Any future change in the Tree Growth Law should include a provision to exempt those presently under the protection of the law.
335. **Value Added Tax:** We oppose any proposed “value added tax”.

- 336. **Vegetable Seeds:** We favor removing the state sales tax on vegetable seeds for home gardeners. (2007)
- 337. **Voluntary Municipal Farm Support Program:** Maine Farm Bureau will support and encourage towns and municipalities to enact a “voluntary Municipal Farm Support Program” to provide property tax relief.

Taxation: Action Policy

- 338. **Agriculture Definition:** We shall work to clarify the definition of “agriculture” and “farm operations” so that the Maine Revenue Services and other state agencies definitions agree with the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry’s definition. (2013)
- 339. **Blueberry Land:** To direct the State tax Assessor to review the valuation of blueberry land in the organized towns and to adjust the valuation the same as the unorganized territories. (2019)
- 340. **Conservation Easement Valuations:** To direct the Maine Assessor’s Office to exempt all lands in conservation easements or 501(c)(3) status that is exempt from taxation in municipal valuation. (2019)
- 341. **Current Use Taxation:** We will submit legislation for the implementation of current use taxation on farm and forestland. The valuation of this farm and forestland will be based upon its ability to generate agricultural or forest income on a sustainable basis. (2017)
- 342. **Farm and Open Space Tax Law:** We support the Farm and Open Space Tax Law and will inform our members on it.
- 343. **Farm Machinery:** Maine Farm Bureau supports adjusting the personal property tax exemption for farm machinery for inflation. (2019)
- 344. **Farmland Taxation:** Maine Farm Bureau will support a Legislative review of farm land taxation. (2018)
- 345. **Greenhouse Structures:** We will work to exempt temporary greenhouse that have no foundation, are movable and depreciable from the real property tax. (2012)
- 346. **Property Valuation:** Maine Farm Bureau will propose legislation to exempt properties located in municipalities that are under some form of conservation easement or 501(c)3 status from being included in the state valuation of the municipality. (2018)
- 347. **Public Access Requirement:** Maine Farm Bureau opposes a requirement to allow public access in order to be eligible to enroll farmland in farmland current use taxation. (2019)
- 348. **Sales Tax:** We will work for sales tax policies and administration procedures assuring uniform treatment of agriculture. We will continue to take an active role in clarifying and supporting the sales tax exemptions for agricultural production.

349. **Sales Tax Exemption - Baler Twine and Wrap:** Maine Farm Bureau should introduce legislation exempting all packaging for hay, straw, and haylage (including twine, net, and wrapping) from sales tax. (2019)

Transportation: Philosophy

350. **Ag Tires on Farm Trucks:** We favor the use of agricultural tires (super singles) on farm trucks. (2014)
351. **Department of Transportation Right-of-Way:** We oppose the DOT using active productive farmland for permanent wind breaks along highways.
352. **Funding of Roads and Highways:** We urge that great care be taken to ensure that rural road funds are not depleted by the financial demands of the road projects. Highway funds should remain dedicated.
353. **Truck weights – Interstate:** We favor raising the gross vehicle weight limit on interstate travel to 100,000 pounds. (2009)

Transportation: Action Policy

354. **Farm Tractor Definition:** We shall introduce legislation removing the definition of “Farm weight tractors” in order that all farm tractors, instead of only lightweight tractors, are exempt from haling over width equipment on public ways. (2015)

University, Research & Extension: Philosophy

355. **Agriculture Research and Cooperative Extension:** We support the Maine Board of Agriculture’s recommendation to the University of Maine President and the University System Chancellor regarding agriculture research and Cooperative Extension capacity assets and needs including support for the agricultural research programs at the university farms. (2015)
356. **Blueberry Hill Research Farm:** We encourage the continued operation of the Maine Experiment Station’s Blueberry Research Farm in Jonesboro by redirecting its resources and emphasis from production to harvesting and marketing.
357. **College Name & Mission:** We recommend the retention of the word agriculture in the name of appropriate college within the University of Maine system which teaches agriculture and the mission of the appropriate college reflect agriculture philosophy and practices.
358. **Cooperative Extension:** We support the Maine Cooperative Extension.
359. **Extension - Agricultural Positions:** We oppose Cooperative Extension changing agricultural positions to non-agricultural positions.

360. **Federal Research Funds:** We support increased USDA funding for agricultural research.
361. **Forestry Education:** We recommend that agriculture students at the University of Maine take at least one course in either forestry or woodlot management.
362. **Forestry Extension:** We favor the expansion of each county Cooperative Extension to include forest management information.
363. **Highmoor Farm:** We support retention and funding, including apple, small fruits and vegetable extension specialists, at Highmoor Farm. (1999)
364. **Land Grant Principles:** We strongly support continued agricultural research at the University of Maine.
365. **Maine Economic Improvement Funding:** We support a state budget increase in the MEIF providing portions of that increase support agricultural research and Cooperative Extension at the University of Maine. (2015)
366. **UMO Trustees:** We support the membership of an active farmer-producer on the Board of Trustees for the University of Maine System.
367. **University of Maine Agricultural Research:** We encourage University of Maine research in both conventional and organic agricultural methods including transgenic crops. Improved agricultural practices and crops are critical to the future livelihood of all Maine farmers. (2000)
368. **Veterinary School:** We favor continued financial support by the State of Maine of the New England Veterinary School.