

AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT

- POLICY STATEMENT -

The challenges of the world's population of seven billion people sharing earth's land and resources will be a demand on the agriculture communities of all countries. To meet this increasing demand, the United States and New York State will need to be good stewards of the environment to protect and support the agricultural production for the nutritional needs of the world's growth. The Grange family supports family-owned farms, the backbone of agricultural production. We support consumers, including schools and other institutions, buying locally produced agricultural products, including all forms of milk and dairy products. In addition, the Grange calls for properly researched initiatives prior to adoption of any regulations.

The world economy has had a dramatic impact on New York State farms and consumers. New York State Grange advocates for revision of the Federal Milk Marketing System that incorporates 21st century dairy farm business realities with processing technologies and domestic and international markets. The Grange supports a system that creates a stable price that covers average costs of production. We work to insure a reliable, stable market for all farmers' milk, free from unequitable hauling costs. The Grange supports the work of all the dairy industries to promote the sale and use of dairy products both locally and in the nation. The Grange supports programs that secure a trained and legal labor force for the farm and food sector. The Grange is pleased to see the recent Canadian Dairy and Mexico import changes and will watch to see their effects on the New York Dairy industry as well as the entire dairy industry. We urge lawmakers to thoroughly consider the needs of the agricultural industry.

The Grange does not agree with the labor board setting minimum wages for farmers under the Farmworkers Fair Labor Practices Act. We also oppose the organization of farmworker's unions.

The Grange recognizes the importance of maintaining and/or improving the fresh water resources in and surrounding New York State. We support funding to mitigate non-point source pollution through such programs as the Agricultural Environmental Management Program funded through the New York State Environmental Protection Fund and through funding secured from the Federal Government. We oppose practices that jeopardize the quality and safety of our water supply. The Grange notes the importance of clean air and supports the development of a cost-effective viable disposal system for refuse from farms and rural upstate New York residents.

Many consumer groups have concerns over the treatment of animals. We support proper animal husbandry practices, but oppose any regulations that would give animals' legal protection to which humans are entitled.

With the current climate that is facing farmers today; mental health issues are becoming more prevalent. There has been a significant increase in the number of suicides among the agricultural community. We encourage all agencies to work together to provide the necessary mental health aid to help in reducing the number of suicides and help to insure better mental health for them.

The New York State Grange concurs with National Grange believing in our democratic process. Our answer must be to join with all interested parties to educate the public about the realities of agriculture and the principles of nature. Legislators, judges, and our citizens need to understand how and why certain methods are used and how agriculture is an essential component in protecting and improving the environment and is critical to the security and future of the United States.

October 2020

AGRIBUSINESS

AGRICULTURAL ACCOUNTING RULES

We opposed changes to the federal tax code that would require agricultural business, with an aggregate business income of \$10 million or more, to use the accrual method of accounting rather than the more common cash-basis method. (2019)

DEVELOPMENT OF AGRIBUSINESS

We support legislation that will enhance rural revitalization, agribusiness development, and micro-enterprise funding; further that we support the creation of a rural revitalization program; creation of an agribusiness development micro-enterprise revolving fund; and the economic development of farm related businesses. (2019)

SOCIAL MEDIA

We vigorously support and encourage the use of promotions using social media to educate the general public on the benefits of a healthy agriculture and groups using social media make their marketing specialists available if asked to assist individual farms in being more media savvy. (2018)

AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS

AGRICULTURAL CUSTOM OPERATORS

We support legislation that would amend Agriculture and Markets Law to include a definition of an agricultural custom operator and provide agricultural district protections when an agricultural custom operator is working on lands within an agricultural district. (2018)

AGRICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

GRANGE REPRESENTATION ON NEW YORK STATE BEEF INDUSTRY COUNCIL

We actively seek an at-large position on the New York State Beef Industry Council, by nominating a representative who would meet the Council's qualifications for a member who would maintain the board's objective of a well-rounded representation of the beef industry. (2020)

ANIMALS (DOMESTIC AND LIVESTOCK)

ANIMAL ABUSE

We encourage stronger enforcement of our current laws pertaining to animal abuse. (2018)

ANIMAL ABUSE REGISTRY

We strongly support legislation that would create a registry of animal abusers, make it available to those involved in the adoption and sale of animals, and ban abusers from future ownership of pets. (2019)

ANIMAL HATCHING PROJECTS

We oppose any legislation that would amend the New York State Education law to ban animal hatching projects in New York State Schools. (2019)

ANIMAL WASTE LISTING

We oppose the listing of animal waste under the hazardous waste regulations of the Environment Protection Agency (E.P.A). (2017)

ANIMAL WELFARE LAWS

We support the laws, regulations and sanctions concerned with the care and welfare of animals (dairy, livestock, poultry, horses, etc.) used for commercial agriculture purposes should remain in the jurisdiction of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. (2019)

ANIMALS AS “SENTIENT BEINGS”

We oppose efforts to declare animals to be “sentient beings”, and all efforts to give animals the legal protections to which humans are entitled. (2017)

FARM RAISED SALMON

We support legislation that would protect our natural supply of wild caught salmon and the assurance of a continuing but limited supply of more affordable farm raised salmon by implementing strong regulations which limit the size and location of the salmon farms, set a limit on the number of salmon produced on each farm in proportion to its natural resources and regular inspections of the farms and filter systems, and that legislation should include both strict penalties and immediate shut down for those who do not comply with regulations. (2019)

LICENSING REGULATIONS FOR PET GROOMERS

We oppose legislation that requires licensing and other regulations for pet groomers as pet owners should have the responsibility of due diligence and checking references of pet groomers or pet housing facilities without undue, costly regulations on the individuals/businesses that are already providing quality services without governmental interference. (2018)

PUPPY MILLS

We support a ban on the transport of puppy mill produced puppies across the state line, the operation of puppy mills in New York State and support greater enforcement of current puppy mill laws and regulations, nationwide. (2017)

RESIDENTIAL BREEDER DEFINITION/REGULATIONS

We support legislation which would amend Ag & Market laws to set specific regulations and minimum standards of care for the residential breeder who raises and sells 30 or fewer domestic pets per year on a residential property. (2017)

THEFT OF FAMILY PETS

We support legislation that would make stealing a pet a Class E felony, (2017)

VACCINATION OF DOMESTIC LIVESTOCK

We urge the New York State Legislature to change regulations for those engaged in animal husbandry to be allowed to purchase the necessary supplies directly from suppliers or manufacturers for animal immunizations without veterinarian prescriptions. (2017)

BEES

COLONY COLLAPSE (HONEYBEE) RESEARCH

We support increased Federal funding for research into the cause of the disappearance of honeybee colonies by disease, presently unidentified predators and other reasons so that bee populations will increase and aid in the pollination of our food crops and, further, that an indemnity program be established to reimburse bee farmers for loss of their colonies. (2018)

HONEYBEE COLONIES REPORT AND UDSA FUNDING

We ask the USDA to immediately re-fund the Honeybee Colonies Report and assure that it is retained in the US budget for 2020 and beyond (2019)

PESTICIDE AND HONEY BEES

We urge pesticide companies and agricultural universities to research and develop pesticides that are not harmful to honey bees and other insects/pollinators beneficial to the environment. (2018)

CAREER RECRUITMENT

FARMER/RANCHERS OPPORTUNITIES

We support legislation that would implement the “Young Farmer Success Act of 2015.” (2020)

VETERINARIAN SHORTAGE

We support continued legislation appropriations for large animal veterinarian programs, such as the Veterinarian Medicine Loan Repayment Program and increasing the number of seats at Cornell University’s large animal medicine classes to ensure the continuing growth of more area veterinarians. (2018)

CHEMICALS/MEDICINE

BIO-DIRECT SPRAYING

We oppose the widespread testing of the “Bio-direct” spray for use in agriculture until all environmental and food safety issues have been addressed by the companies (i.e. Monsanto, Syngenta, Bayer, etc.) who are developing this technology and that the USDA issue a moratorium restricting “bio-direct” spraying of crops until it has been proven 100% safe for crops, the environment and human/animal consumption. (2020)

COMMERCIAL PESTICIDE APPLICATION

We support legislation that would permit commercial applicators of pesticides to apply pesticides in a dosage, concentration, or frequency less than that specified on the labeling. (2020)

LONG TERM EFFECTS OF ROUNDUP

We urge Congress and the Department of Agriculture to further investigate the long-term effects of Glyphosate (Roundup) and the long-term effects of genetically altered seeds that are resistive to Glyphosate on the food chain. (2017)

USE OF BOVINE SOMATOTROPIN

We oppose any ban on sale of dairy products from cows injected with bovine somatotropin (BST). (2020)

CRIMINAL ACTS

AGRICULTURAL TRESPASS

We support the increase of penalties for criminal acts of destruction of agricultural crops, products and property. (2019)

DAIRY/MILK PRICING

DAIRY FARMERS' BILL OF RIGHTS

We support the establishment of a Dairy Farmer's Bill of Rights by the Department of Agriculture and Markets that prohibits unfair trade practices which would intentionally impair a farmer's freedom to bargain collectively, with other farmers, in the marketing of the farmer's products and provides the Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Markets to take action against violators who interfere with this right to bargain and increases the limit on damages, up to ten thousand dollars, for encouraging/permitting any violations found. (2018)

DAIRY MARGIN INSURANCE LOCATION CALCULATION

We support legislation that would amend the 2014 Farm Bill to require the Secretary of Agriculture to use data from each state to calculate average feed cost and actual dairy production margins in order to improve the federal dairy insurance program by more accurately reflecting the labor, transportation, and feed costs experienced by farmers in different regions. (2016)

DAIRY PRIDE ACT/LABELING OF MILK

We support the Dairy Pride Act or similar legislation and request that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) require impersonators of dairy products to remove the terms "milk," "yogurt," and "cheese" from nutritionally inferior plant or artificial substitutes and "milk," "yogurt," and "cheese" only be used for those foods that come from a mammalian animal source. (2017)

FAIR MILK HAULING PRACTICES

We request lawmakers investigate and draft necessary legislation to support fair practices in regard to milk hauling and pricing regardless of the size of farm and number of cattle. (2017)

NATIONAL MILK HEARING

We urge the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) hold a national milk hearing, which would investigate pricing policies that would be in the best interest of all dairy farmers. (2017)

REGIONAL DAIRY PRICING SYSTEM

We support legislation to enable dairy producers to receive a fair market price. We encourage the Congress to pass legislation that will include regional fair market prices, a farmer led milk production growth management plan and develop a smart dairy trade policy. (2019)

ENERGY

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES

We encourage the research and development of safe, economical, and environmentally friendly alternative energy sources. (2018)

DEC GAS WELL REGULATIONS

We support continued landowner operation of existing self-use gas wells in compliance with previous regulations. (2017)

ENERGY EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS

We support legislation that would establish a dairy farm improved energy efficiency program that would provide grants and low interest loans to farmers to assist them with high efficiency lighting, high efficiency pump and cooling equipment, and other energy management systems. (2020)

FINANCE/FUNDING

AGRICULTURE DISASTER AREA REVOLVING FUND

We support the establishment of an “Agriculture Disaster Area Revolving Fund” in New York State to provide farmers with low interest loans in time of major disaster. (2019)

AGRICULTURE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

We urge the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to establish permanent, consistent funding for technical programming statewide, and request the State Legislature to continue funding the New York State Agriculture Environmental Management Program. (2017)

FARM SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

We support legislation that would amend the banking regulations to allow for the establishment of tax deferred farms savings accounts that would allow farmers to save income from prosperous years for use, tax free, during years when income is less than favorable. (2018)

FUNDING SUPPORT FOR NEW YORK STATE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION FUNDS

We urge continued appropriation of Environmental Protection funds for conservation projects. (2017)

HISTORIC BARN PRESERVATION

We urge continued funding for Historic Barn Preservation in the future. (2016)

MONEY FOR STEWARDSHIP OF STATE LANDS

We request that stewardship of state lands remains a line item in the New York State Budget and that New York State abides by the current laws that were enacted to provide adequate funding for stewardship of New York State owned lands. (2017)

NEW YORK FARM VIABILITY INSTITUTE

We support an annual appropriation of at least \$1.5 million from the State of New York to support the New York Farm Viability Institute and to fund projects that will address challenges facing New York's farms. (2019)

REIMBURSEMENT TO COUNTY FAIRS

We request that premium reimbursement at current levels to county fairs remain intact, thus sustaining an important aspect of rural living and long-standing American traditions provided by our county fairs. (2019)

SEEDING RURAL RESILIENCE ACT

We support legislation that would provide funding for public service announcements to increase awareness of farm and ranch stress and destigmatize mental health care in rural communities; provide voluntary stress management training to Farm Service Agency, Risk Management Agency and National Resources Conservation Service employees as these agencies are constantly in direct contact with members of the agricultural community and will be able to direct producers in need to appropriate mental health services and will be able to direct producers and rural stakeholders at the federal, state, and local levels to assess the causes of mental stress in farmers and ranchers and identify best practices for responding to such stress. (2020)

TAX CREDIT INCENTIVES TO CURB FOOD WASTE

We support legislation to establish a tax credit for grocery stores, food brokers, wholesalers, restaurateurs or catering services that donate surplus or about-to-waste food to local food banks and/or pantries. (2017)

FOOD/FOOD SAFETY

ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS IN MILK

We strongly oppose the addition of any artificial sweeteners in milk and other dairy products. We oppose any change in the definition of “milk” so that chemical sweeteners, like Aspartame and Sucralose, can be used as optional ingredients not listed on the product label. (2018)

GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMO) LABELING STANDARDS

We support federal legislation that would establish federal regulations that would bring consistency in Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) labeling standards throughout the United States. (2020)

HOMELAND SECURITY FOR AGRICULTURE

We support the office of Homeland Security in their efforts to investigate, monitor, develop, and implement plans for the prevention of and/or protection from acts of terrorism and destruction against agricultural producers, facilities of agricultural research, and major food processing and distribution centers. (2017)

MEAT PROCESSING PLANT INSPECTIONS

We oppose any cutbacks in the federal daily inspections of meat processing plants, further that we oppose self-inspection of meat processing plants. (2020)

MILK VENDING MACHINES

We support and encourage the installation of milk vending machines in all public and private schools in the State of New York. (2017)

“NATURAL” FOOD LABELING

We support federal regulations that would establish criteria for the use of the term “natural” on food labeling to give it real meaning. (2016)

POULTRY AND FOOD PROCESSING OUT-OF-COUNTRY

We oppose any plan to ship poultry or any other food for processing to another country, when we have companies who can do the processing here under stricter health regulations. (2016)

USDA REGULATIONS/FOOD RECALLS

We support changing the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations regarding food recalls that will: (1) make it mandatory to inform the public and local health officials of the recall of tainted food products, who the manufacturer/processor is and where the food products have been distributed; (2) require the USDA website to be more user-friendly so this information can be easily obtained by the general public; (3) require all recalls of tainted food products be made mandatory, not voluntary, by the manufacturer/processor. (2020)

WHOLE MILK IN SCHOOLS

We support the USDA criteria for school lunches be revised to include whole milk for consumption by our nation's school children in addition to allowing a variety of dairy products, including whole and two-percent milk, be offered by all New York schools as part of their food service program. (2017)

GOVERNMENT/REGULATORY AGENCIES

ANTITRUST MODERNIZATION COMMISSION

We oppose the recommendations of the Antitrust Modernization Commission and continue to support current Grange policy on the Capper-Volstead Act. (2017)

ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS TRAINING PROGRAM

We support legislation that would amend the Environmental Conservation Law to establish a training program to foster awareness of laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to the farming industry and to provide funding of such program from fines collected pursuant to certain violations. (2016)

PESTICIDE USAGE AND NOTIFICATION

We oppose local regulation of pesticide usage and notification legislation. (2020)

We oppose legislation prohibiting the commercial and residential application of pesticides for pest control. (2020)

HYDRAULIC FRACTURING

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We support an indefinite moratorium on the hydraulic fracturing process, the horizontal drilling for natural gas, until it can be proven by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and the Environmental Protection Agency that the hydraulic fracturing process is not a threat of our natural resources of water and air or to our human health. (2020)

We encourage all studies to be accelerated so that a final decision can be made as to the safety of the hydraulic fracturing process. (2018)

We support legislation that will protect the water supply of people who are surrounded by hydraulic fracturing process for oil and natural gas. (2018)

We support legislation which prohibits fracking wastewater from being used on highways until totally proven safe to do so. (2019)

We support a ban on the importation of all waste materials from hydraulic fracturing processes. (2020)

We support legislation that would require all landfills to be cleaned of Radium 226 contamination if hydraulic fracturing waste materials were disposed of at their facility. (2016)

We oppose the discharge of all radioactive materials from hydraulic fracturing processes into waterways. (2016)

IMPORT/EXPORT

BULK APPLE EXPORTS

We support legislation that would eliminate the second inspection of bulk bin apples by the Department of Agriculture before being exported to Canada. (2018)

IMPORTED AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS

We favor State and National legislation that would protect our farmers from imported farm products that are subsidized to the point that they unfairly compete with and do not meet the same safety standards that are required of our farm products. (2016)

IMPORTED APPLE CONCENTRATE

We strongly urge the U.S. to charge a tariff on imported apple concentrate, further that the apple concentrate meet the same standards as apple concentrate from U.S. apple farmers. (2019)

INTERNATIONAL CONCERNS

CLOSING MEXICO BORDER

We are opposed to any effort by the President or Congress to close the border with Mexico as it would negatively affect the agricultural economy of the United States. (2019)

FEDERAL AGRICULTURAL POLICY

We recommend convening a consortium of experts representing land grant universities, agri-business and farm organizations that will design pro-active federal farm policy which more accurately addresses current and future social, economic and environmental needs of United States farmers, agri-businesses, the food industry, the national and international consumers, and international trading partners. (2016)

FOREIGN FOOD PROCESSING

We strongly oppose the processing of food to be marketed in this nation within countries unable or unwilling to provide a system of inspections and checks meeting the standards of the United States on the processing of the particular food. (2018)

IMPORTATION OF CATTLE/MEAT/MEAT PRODUCTS

We are opposed to the importation of animals, meat, and meat products into the United States from any country having bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) until scientific data shows the supply is safe. (2020)

MILK PROTEIN CONCENTRATE IMPORTS (MPC)

We urge the reclassification of Milk Protein Concentrate as a dairy product by the World Trade Organization, the adoptions of tariff-rate quotas on MPC entering the country and the adoption of standards governing how MPC is used and an adequate inspection process to ensure compliance. (2017)

INVASIVE SPECIES

ASIAN CARP INFESTATION

We support the efforts of the agencies involved in the control of the Asian Carp infestation in the Mississippi River and Great Lakes Systems and that the other states and Canadian provinces that border these systems be encouraged to be actively involved in the programs that are currently in place and any further measures to be taken to protect the fisheries of the Mississippi River and Great Lakes. (2020)

INVASIVE SPECIES ERADICATION

We encourage the State of New York to target a portion of invasive species efforts to specifically deal with noxious invasive species posing a threat to human health and that all organizations work together in a coordinated effort to deal with these types of invasive species. (2019)

LABOR

DAIRY AND SHEEP H-2A VISA ENHANCEMENT ACT

We support legislation that would amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to expand the H-2A nonimmigrant visa category (temporary agricultural workers) to include dairy workers and shepherders with the initial period of admission for such temporary workers being three years and allowing for extensions of additional three-year periods without requiring a period of absence from the United States be Necessary for an extension. (2020)

EMPLOYMENT OF MIGRANT FARM WORKERS

We encourage passage of legislation that would relieve farm employers of the responsibility for illegal immigrant workers as long as the employer has some documentation on file at their place of business indicating that the workers are legal. (2016)

FARM WORKERS' FAIR LABOR PRACTICES ACT

We strongly oppose the Farm Workers' Fair Labor Practices Act. (2019)

IMMIGRATION REFORM (MIGRANT LABOR)

We strongly urge the U.S. Congress to change the immigration policies and Immigration & Naturalization Services to modify the regulation to make it easier for farm employers to hire migrant labor without jeopardizing the security or domestic workforce of the U.S. (2018)

We support modification of the H-1B VISA program to include advanced agricultural skills as technical skills. (2017)

MINIMUM WAGE FOR COOPERATIVE MARKETS

We support changes to the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) that would exempt volunteer worker member co-operatives from minimum wage requirements, allowing members access to quality foods at affordable prices. (2016)

LAND/LAND USE

DEVELOPMENT OF CELLULOSIC ETHANOL AND USE OF DORMANT FARMLAND

We urge that the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets support programs to encourage the use of current dormant farmland by putting them back into production, particularly for the use of crops that can be used for the production of bio-fuels. (2016)

GENERAL OBLIGATIONS LAW

We support legislation that would amend the General Obligations law concerning limiting the liability of landowners and allowing the use of their land for recreational activities. (2019)

LANDOWNER'S DEER PERMIT

We request the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation revise the qualifications to read: "The owner of 50 acres or more of land (need not be adjoining) contained in one or more parcels located within the boundaries of the Wildlife Management Unit be eligible for antlerless permits." (2016)

WETLAND REGULATIONS

We are opposed to expanded regulation of wetlands less than 12.4 acres or any other wetland regulations that further restrict the rights of property owners. (2020)

LEGAL/LIABILITY LAWS

EQUINE ACTIVITY SAFETY CODE

We support legislation that would amend the general obligations law in relation to the liability of persons involved in equine activities; by establishing an "equine activity safety code act" that sets guidelines for the conduct of participants, sponsors, and professionals involved in the sport of horseback riding; educates the public as to the inherent risks of the sport of horseback riding so as to minimize the risk of injury to persons engaged in the sport of horseback riding, promotes the safety in the horseback riding industry, and preserves the financial sustainability of the equine sponsors and equine professionals engaged in the horseback riding industry by defining situations where the participant must accept responsibility for the inherent risks of participating in horse-related activities. (2020)

LUMBER/TIMBER

GOVERNMENT SUBSIDIZED LUMBER OPERATIONS

We support legislation that would require private timber companies wishing to purchase trees in our national forest be made to assume the total bill of the harvesting plus a reasonable return to the treasury for the trees cut to cover the cost of maintaining these forests to marketability. (2019)

NATIONAL FOREST PROTECTION

We urge National Grange to use its influence to allow best management practices in national forests. (2020)

MARKETING/FARMERS' MARKETS

CAPPER-VOLSTEAD ACT

We oppose the repeal of the Capper-Volstead Act of 1922 which permits farmers to work together collectively marketing their products if they choose. (2020)

FARMERS' MARKETS AND COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

We support farmers' markets, family farms and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA's) producing and selling homegrown agricultural products. (2020)

FOOD HUBS

We strongly support continuing and expanding financial support to food hubs for distribution of local produced food. (2018)

LOCAL FOOD ACCESS

We support legislation that would create a task force on improving urban and rural access to locally produced healthy food; identify strategies, opportunities and methods to expand such access and to report to the Governor and Legislature within one year after appointment. (2018)

RETAIL FARM OPERATIONS

We support legislation that amends sections 301 and 308 on the Agriculture and Markets Law to include road-side stands and retail farm markets in the definition of a "farm operation" and thus give farmers protection for their retail farm operations under the state's right-to-farm laws. (2016)

SIGNAGE FOR FARM MARKETS

We support legislation changing the current New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) law to allow the placement of signs along New York State highways in order to promote farmers and their products. (2017)

RECYCLING

BURNING OF AGRICULTURAL TRASH

We reaffirm 2008 policy that opposes further restrictions on the burning of agricultural trash. (2019)

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM/CONSERVATION RESERVE ENHANCED PROGRAM

We support the Federal Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the Conservation Reserve Enhanced Program (CREP) and the continuance of traditional Practice Incentive Payments, Signing Incentive Payments and 50% Cost Share Rate for establishing Riparian Buffers and associated Best Management Practices (BMP'S) such as fencing, stream crossings, and the development of Alternative Water Supplies, as well as the expansion of federal Acreage Caps that will limit future participation by farmers. (2018)

SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT EDUCATION PROGRAMS

We support legislation to amend Section 9 of the Soil & Water Conservation District Law to authorize public information and education programs for Soil & Water Conservation Districts. (2016)

WATERFRONT REVITALIZATION GRANT PROGRAM

We support legislation that would amend executive law to allow Soil and Water Conservation districts, acting in cooperation with one or more affected local governments, to be eligible applicants for the waterfront revitalization grant program. (2016)

TAX INCENTIVES

AGRICULTURE BUILDING TAX EXEMPTIONS

We support legislation that would provide a ten-year real property tax exemption for structures and buildings built on land used in agricultural production thus improving their land and business. (2017)

AGRICULTURAL LAND ASSESSMENTS

We support legislation that would amend Agriculture and Markets Law that would eliminate the option of standard assessments used by local taxing jurisdictions and use only agricultural assessments on farming operations. (2019)

AGRICULTURAL LAND TAX CREDITS

We support legislation to amend the New York State Tax law to provide a tax credit to farmers who sell or rent their agricultural land to a young farmer. (2019)

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS USED BY RESTAURANTS

We support legislation that creates a tax incentive (\$100 on every \$1,000 spent) for restaurants that purchase produce grown on a New York State farm. (2016)

FARM PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENT CAP

We support legislation that would establish a cap on increases for property tax assessments for agricultural land and to a 2% annual growth as a means of protecting farmers from large increases in assessments when fair market values of agricultural land increases and that establishes an annual 2% tax cap on agricultural property tax assessment increases. (2018)

GROSS SALES REQUIREMENT

We support a reduction of the qualifying gross sales requirements of farm products from \$10,000 to \$7,500 for an agricultural operation to qualify for a real property tax agricultural exemption. (2018)

LIVESTOCK DEPRECIATION

We support legislation that would expand the definition of qualifying livestock eligible for the 50% bonus depreciation to include all dairy cows purchased by a dairy farmer operator for business use, regardless of whether the cow's original use had commenced with another taxpayer. (2018)

MINIMUM WAGE EMPLOYEE TAX CREDIT FOR FARMS

We support legislation that would double the \$30 million amount budgeted for the minimum wage employee tax credit for farms to \$60 million, and proportionately increase the minimum wage employee tax credit to help farms survive the tight economic situation they are already facing. (2017)

PROPOSED TAX ON COW FLATULENCE

We oppose all regulations that would allow the Environmental Protection Agency to impose any cow flatulence emission tax on dairy and beef farmers, both presently and in the future, within the United States. (2019)

YOUTH AGRICULTURE PROTECTION ACT

We support the Student Agriculture Protection Act which states that it modifies the requirement for calculating taxable income to exclude from the gross income of a student agriculturist up to \$5,000.00 of the gain from the sale or exchange of personal property (including livestock, crops, and agricultural mechanics or shop products) produced or raised by the student agriculturist. (2019)

UTILITIES

DELINQUENT ELECTRIC ACCOUNTS

We encourage the Public Service Commission to enforce regulations prohibiting electric companies from shutting off power to active agricultural operations without at least a 10-day notice and an in-person contact with the individual named as account holder. (2018)

WATER/WATERWAYS

GREAT LAKES BASIN

We recommend that State and National Granges monitor closely the proposals of the Great Lakes Basin and its possible adverse impact on the agricultural industry and to become involved in decision making as local and state governments address adoption and implementation of such regulations. (2020)

GREAT LAKES WATER REMOVAL

We oppose the removal or sale of water from the Great Lakes watershed. (2019)

OPPOSITION TO NEW YORK STATE INCLUSION BY ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY IN CHESAPEAKE BAY TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOAD REGULATIONS

We request that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) acknowledge the clear water New York already contributes to the Chesapeake Bay and strongly objects to New York being placed on the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) list by the EPA and also urges Congressional and State representatives to intercede with EPA and enact superseding legislation if required, to remove the New York portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed from the TMDL. We also request that the EPA report to our representatives on their response and adaptations regarding the aforementioned concerns. (2016)

THE WATER AFFORDABILITY, TRANSPARENCY, EQUITY, AND RELIABILITY (WATER) ACT

We support legislation that would provide adequate funding to fix and maintain our nation's reservoirs, treatment plants, and pipes to ensure that all the people in our country have access to clean drinking water. (2019)

WILDLIFE/HUNTING

AGE RESTRICTION FOR HUNTERS

We oppose any changes to New York State Environmental Conservation Laws raising the current minimum ages for obtaining New York State hunting licenses. (2019)

CORMORANT POPULATION CONTROL

We strongly support the efforts of the Cormorant Control Working Group, the NYS DEC and the Province of Ontario on their collaborative effort to control cormorants on the St. Lawrence River and Black Lake and receive immediate assistance in cormorant control to protect and maintain its current fishing and tourism economy. (2016)

COYOTES

We strongly urge the N.Y. Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to institute a program of control of coyotes to reduce their number to include regular year-round hunting and consideration of a statewide "bounty" on them and, further, assist and work closely with the DEC on this endeavor and also to help educate the public that a person has the right to shoot a coyote whether in or out of season if it is doing damage to their animals. (2017)

ENDANGERED SPECIES

We support legislation which would legally allow people to defend themselves from an attack by a rattlesnake or any other animal without concern of retribution from government authorities. (2020)

HUNTING CONTESTS AND FIELD TRIALS

We oppose any legislation that would make it illegal to organize, sponsor, conduct, promote, or participate in any contest, competition, tournament, or derby where the objective of such contest or competition is to take wildlife, and furthermore supports the rights of sportsmen and sporting dogs in doing what they are trained and bred to do. (2019)

HUNTING, FISHING AND TRAPPING FEES

We support reducing hunting, fishing and trapping license fees. (2020)

INTRODUCTION OF WILDLIFE

We urge our State Legislature to be diligent about protecting our people, livestock and crops from danger and that no wild animals be introduced into New York State without prior legal notice to the public and prior consultation with and the consent of the county legislatures in the areas affected, and that just compensation be provided to land owners whose property is set aside as a habitat for any endangered species. (2017)

We urge legislation be enacted that would prohibit wild animal re-introduction without a referendum approval by area residents. (2016)

We oppose the introduction of Elk into the wild of New York State. (2017)

LAND PURCHASES

We oppose the State of New York buying up large tracts of land to turn to forever wild until such time as the State's financial status improves. (2017)

NEW YORK STATE SPORTSMEN

We support legislation that provides for continual sportsmen's rights and encourages youth to participate in outdoor sporting activities with proper adult supervision. (2020)

POISONOUS SNAKES AND PREDATORY ANIMALS

We support a ban on the introduction and/or release of any poisonous snakes or predatory animals in New York State. (2016)

We recommend that the Department of Environmental Conservation post public lands where there is an infestation of poisonous snakes. (2016)

SPOTLIGHTING IN NEW YORK STATE

We support legislation that would change the Environmental Conservation Law to require that handguns must also be locked in a case or securely locked in the trunk of the vehicle while spotlighting. (2020)

WILD ANIMAL RELEASE

We support legislation that requires Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to notify local residents of wild animal releases so they can be alerted to necessary safety awareness measures. (2020)

WILDLIFE DAMAGE

We oppose the passage of legislation which would limit farmers' ability to protect their crops from wildlife damage. (2016)