




SOUTH DAKOTA
Farmers Union

www.sdfu.org

2021
POLICY BOOK

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**LONG TERM PURPOSES AND POLICY PROGRAM OF
SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS UNION**

2021 PROGRAM AND POLICY STATEMENT OF THE
SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS UNION AS ADOPTED BY THE DELEGATES AT THE
SOUTH DAKOTA FARMERS UNION CONVENTION
DECEMBER 9, 2020

I. MISSION

Uniting farmers, ranchers, and communities
to strengthen South Dakota.

II. AGRICULTURAL PROGRAMS

A. Commodities

**1. Commodity Research and Promotion
Programs**

a. Checkoff Programs

i. We will support research and
promotion programs financed by deductions
from the proceeds of sales by producers of
agriculture commodities, if the following
criteria are met:

A. Checkoff Board Appointment

Producers affiliated with a foreign owned
entity should be prohibited from serving on a
Checkoff board. United States Department
of Agriculture should ensure that there is no
conflict of interest among Checkoff board
appointments.

B. That disbursement of funds
collected is controlled by boards of all
producers elected by the producers assessed.

C. The operations of the program are
controlled by those producers' boards,
excluding individuals with ties to foreign
entities.

D. The programs are voluntary at the
point of sale.

E. At least 75 percent of all collected
checkoff dollars each year are spent.

b. National Beef Checkoff

i. We believe in beef checkoff reform.

ii. We urge National Farmers Union
(NFU) to act as a contracting agent of the
National Beef Checkoff whenever possible.

iii. Imports should be excluded from the
checkoff collection and U.S. Beef Checkoff
dollars should be used to promote U.S. beef
only.

iv. We urge complete separation
between the beef checkoff and the National
Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA).

**c. South Dakota Beef Industry Council
(SDBIC)**

i. We support at least three
representatives from South Dakota Farmers
Union (SDFU) on SDBIC.

ii. We urge the representation of the dairy
cattle industry.

2. Marketing

a. We urge that appropriate steps be taken to
establish federal protections for all
agricultural commodities.

b. We support federal appropriations for
grants-in-aid to state-operated programs of
seed and fertilizer inspection, plant and
livestock, pest disease eradication and
control, forest fire prevention, market news
and warehouse licensing and other farmer
and consumer protective and marketing
services including those carried out by the
Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as well
as by the U.S. Department of Agriculture
(USDA).

c. We also demand that the Commodity
Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) fully
enforce existing laws, rules, regulations and
the CFTC deny any request for an increase in

the number of positions that may be held by any individual trader.

3. Grain

a. Bonding

i. The cost of elevator bonding has created recurring problems for farmers and their cooperatives during recent years. We urge continued monitoring of bonding costs and a review of possible alternatives.

ii. We support a study of bonding requirements or other producer protection methods be undertaken by the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) because of growing concerns that some elevators are not bonded sufficiently to protect their customers.

b. Inspection

i. We urge Congress to review the adequacy of the grain inspection system with emphasis on prohibiting conflicts of interest between inspectors and grain traders.

ii. We urge Congress to review the adequacy of the grain inspection system with emphasis on providing penalties for noncompliance including revocation of license, suspension of operations, fines and/or imprisonment. The export of grain handling license of any firm found guilty of adulteration of grain moving in international trade should be revoked for a period of not less than 10 years.

iii. We urge Congress to continue to investigate grain companies as to the total pricing system and any quality discounts such as vomitoxin levels and scab.

c. Sale

i. We urge that an equivalent bushel concept (EBC) be adopted, which can be done by having a standard base moisture level for each grain and the producer would be paid for that level. This can be a deterrent to the illegal practice of adding water to dry grain, bringing it up to standard moisture content.

ii. We ask Congress to enact legislation making it illegal for major grain traders to sell more grain than they owned during a delivery month.

d. Protections

i. We support a contract grower's bill of rights.

ii. We support the establishment and enforcement of international grain standards designed to protect the interests of agricultural producers and consumers throughout the world.

iii. Producers should have full flexibility to make their own planting decisions.

iv. We support the validity of a farmer's warehouse receipt as proof of his ownership of stored grain in an elevator. We also support legislation prohibiting seizure of said grain by elevator creditors upon foreclosure of elevators.

v. We support grain pool indemnity fund, as modeled after North Dakota.

vi. Grain sales and voluntary credit sales would be covered by the funds.

vii. The Farmer-Owned Grain Reserve (FOR) should be restored and strengthened to serve as an "ever-normal granary" for both producers and consumers. The reserve should be expanded to include all non-perishable farm commodities and strengthened to provide for at least one year's consumption and a strategic feed grain reserve dedicated to renewable energy production.

viii. We support removing grain regulations from the PUC, and to be regulated by the Secretary of Agriculture.

4. Specialty Crops

a. We support growing specialty crops including but not limited to fruits, vegetables, dried fruits, nursery crops, floriculture and horticulture including turf grass, sod, pulse and herbal crops.

b. We support policy allowing South Dakota Farmers to grow and process industrial

1 hemp under state law following federal
2 standards.

3

4 **5. Livestock**

5 a. Animal Welfare

6 i. We support continued cooperation
7 with other agricultural organizations to
8 combat misinformation and support good
9 animal husbandry practices.

10 ii. We support all efforts to refute anti-
11 meat campaigns. Farmers Union members
12 are urged to write letters and contact the
13 media with accurate information on the use
14 and benefits of all meats.

15 iii. We recommend that SDFU assign a
16 person to monitor the activities of animal
17 rights advocates.

18 iv. We oppose the ideologies and
19 agendas of extremist organizations.

20 v. We favor the humane treatment of
21 animals; however, we urge caution in passing
22 laws regarding animal rights so that sound
23 management practices are not adversely
24 affected.

25 vi. We support agricultural industry
26 established standards for the management,
27 care and treatment of animals in agriculture,
28 commerce and research.

29 b. Antibiotics

30 Ionophores should not be defined as an
31 antibiotic and all subsequent research
32 statistics should be defined as separate
33 entities.

34 c. Dairy

35 i. We support regional milk marketing
36 compacts provided they:

37 A. Address the price of all classes of
38 milk — not just Class I.

39 B. Set the compact price at the cost
40 of production.

41 ii. We support a dairy pricing system that
42 protects a profit margin.

43 iii. We understand health measures but
44 resist further consolidation and burdensome
45 restrictions on raw milk sales from on-farm

46 production to the public as long as adequate
47 labeling is provided.

48 iv. We support the family dairy industry
49 and statewide efforts for continued
50 development of dairy production and
51 manufacturing.

52 d. Development

53 i. Livestock production is essential to
54 the well-being of S.D.

55 ii. We actively promote the
56 development of livestock production in S.D.
57 as a vital component in maintaining a healthy
58 agricultural sector.

59 iii. We support the implementation of
60 anaerobic digesters at facilities which
61 provide green energy and will provide more
62 efficient fertilizer.

63 iv. We support the establishment of a
64 clean-up fund for large-scale livestock
65 facilities. Revenues should be collected
66 annually from operators of confinements
67 with 1,000 animal units or more and
68 deposited into a fund to provide for clean-up
69 of wastes attributable to such facilities,
70 including newly closed or abandoned
71 facilities.

72 e. Marketing

73 We support the following efforts and
74 programs aimed at increasing the farmer's
75 and rancher's share of the consumer's meat
76 dollar:

77 i. We support development of farmer
78 and rancher-owned and/or local or regional
79 meat packing and retail cooperatives.

80 ii. We support continuous monitoring of
81 livestock and meat imports to properly assess
82 their impact on domestic markets.

83 iii. When state inspection guidelines
84 meet or exceed Federal guidelines, we
85 support interstate distribution of state
86 inspected meats.

87 f. Transportation

88 i. We support transportation of all
89 livestock, including horses, for slaughter
90 domestically and internationally.

1 ii. We support a permanent rule change
2 to the Electronic Logging Device (ELD) rule
3 that allows flexibility for truckers hauling
4 livestock. These rules should take into
5 consideration the time sensitive manner of
6 hauling livestock and the safety
7 considerations of both the public and
8 livestock.

9 10 **B. New and Beginning Farmers and** 11 **Ranchers**

12 13 **1. Lending Programs**

14 a. We believe that the federal government's
15 status as a guarantor of loans by commercial
16 lenders must be balanced with direct lending
17 programs targeted at assisting beginning
18 farmers. Direct loans should be viewed as
19 "yardstick" credit to keep interest on private
20 loans and government-insured loans at the
21 lowest possible levels.

22 b. Efforts should be made to increase the
23 number of loans at lower interest rates with
24 emphasis to beginning farmers.

25 c. In times of drought, natural or price
26 disaster, low-interest loans should be made
27 available to farmers and ranchers with a
28 proven loss on their operation. Interest and
29 principal payments on existing loans should
30 be deferred. We further recommend that
31 during the period that a moratorium shall
32 apply, principal repayment time be extended
33 equally to the crop years lost by disaster and
34 interest repayments should be deferred
35 without prejudice during this same period.

36 d. Operators should be given the
37 opportunity to refinance at a lower rate of
38 interest. Farm operating loans should bear
39 interest of 5 percent or less. Emergency and
40 disaster loans should be limited to the
41 operating costs of the next year's production.

42 e. In addition, we propose that loan
43 payments to the Farm Service Agency (FSA)
44 be placed in a state FSA revolving fund
45 which would then be made available for
46 future loans within the state.

47 48 **2. Recruitment**

49 a. We encourage SDFU to develop and
50 maintain a registry for aspiring farmers as
51 well as for established farmers who desire to
52 pass their operation on to a beginning farmer.

53 b. SDFU should develop an educational tool
54 to highlight that there are also many
55 opportunities in agriculture other than the
56 predominant mega-crop and livestock farms
57 and ranches of the state.

58 59 **C. U.S. Department of Agriculture**

60 61 **1. Animal, Plant, Health Inspection** 62 **Service**

63 a. Animal Disease Traceability (ADT)

64 i. The stated purpose of the ADT is to
65 identify specific animals and record their
66 movements to enable a 48-hour trace back of
67 any disease or exposed animal.

68 A. We support a universal RFID ear-
69 tagging system along with the support of
70 COOL as long as there is federal cost sharing
71 so producers do not bear the entire cost.

72 B. We support local control of the
73 S.D. data (the S.D. Animal Industry Board).

74 C. Confidentiality of collected data
75 is essential to the integrity of the program.
76 Also, an exemption from Freedom of
77 Information Act (FOIA) and limiting
78 producer liability after an ownership change
79 would need to be included in any program.

80 D. We would not support requiring
81 4-H and National FFA Organization (FFA)
82 youth to sign up their parents with a premise
83 identification.

84 b. Health Research

85 i. We support the continued testing of
86 plants and animals for research and disease
87 control.

88 ii. All testing should be open and
89 transparent.

90 iii. USDA should create a
91 comprehensive plan for all test results.

iv. We believe cattle processing plants should be allowed to test for Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE) in individual animals.

c. Pest Control

We urge establishment of a USDA/farmer cost-sharing program for insect and pest control during times of emergency.

2. Labeling

a. Country-of-Origin Labeling (COOL)

i. We support mandatory COOL for meat products. Animals must be born, raised, harvested, and processed in the U.S. to receive a U.S. origin label such as “Product of USA”.

ii. We recommend that USDA and Congress reinstate mandatory COOL similar to the current WTO compliant Australian model.

b. Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)

The rights of both GMO and non-GMO producers should be respected as appropriate regulatory agencies continue to research and evaluate these concerns, including but not limited to required consumer labeling for goods made from or containing GMOs.

c. Lab Cultured Protein

Any alternative protein, including soy based, vegetable based, synthetic protein and cultured cells are to be prevented from using the term “meat” on their product.

d. Milk

Any alternative product, not derived from lactating mammals, cannot be labeled as milk.

3. Crop Insurance

a. We support yield adjustments for disaster losses and the encouragement of expansion for specialty crops and livestock.

b. We continue to favor expansion of the revenue assurance program.

c. Crop insurance should be subsidized on a declining scale, with a regional adjustment to premium cost

d. Conservation compliance should be mandatory for government-subsidized crop insurance.

e. Lending institutions should not be allowed to sell crop insurance.

f. There should be no penalty to hay or graze prevent plant acres after regional average killing frost date.

4. Risk Management Agency (RMA)

We support Inventory Management Soil Enhancement Tool (IMSET) as a mechanism for farmers to voluntarily use annually to enhance individual farmers’ pricing inventory while enhancing their land’s marginal soil.

5. Farm Service Agency (FSA)

a. We reaffirm our support for the farmer-elected committee system. This proven system should not be compromised through the addition of non-farm or non-ranch appointees.

b. Farmer-elected committees ought to have more power over day-to-day decision making involved in administration of the farm program.

c. We urge uniform interpretation of rules and regulations between county and state offices.

d. We oppose efforts to dismantle the FSA delivery system through office closures and elimination of county office employee jobs. Efforts to reduce spending ought to be fairly balanced among all agencies of the USDA and federal government.

e. We support the continuation of the limited resource loan program and urge that 35 percent of FSA loans be set aside for this program.

f. We urge loans for construction and/or improvement of farm/ranch homes be made available.

g. We continue to support the major provisions of the 1987 Farm Credit Act and demand that FSA observe the intent of that legislation. In cases of an appeal, the State Mediation Board should be used to ensure impartiality.

6. Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA)

a. We urge the USDA to continually monitor the operation of the mandatory livestock price reporting system.

b. We urge that the Packers and Stockyards Act be fully enforced with equal attention paid to the problems of monopolistic control, manipulation of prices, deception and fraud.

c. GIPSA must be maintained and adequately funded to accomplish its mission. It should be prepared to fully coordinate research and investigative work with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

d. We urge GIPSA to review and revise its livestock buyer bonding requirements to ensure adequate protection to the sellers of livestock.

e. We support the break-up of multinational companies and incentivize local and regional processor development, and prevent harmful vertical integration.

7. Marketing and Research

a. We strongly urge the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) to utilize the best and most accurate information for releasing crop and livestock production reports.

b. It is very important that the USDA provide accurate, up-to-date information to the public with regard to farm prices, income and parity levels.

c. The USDA Secretary should present the facts concerning the costs and benefits of public expenditures and of the small share of the consumer food dollar received by farmers and ranchers.

d. We urge continued research for USDA at universities to develop better pest control

techniques and educational programs to assist farmers and foresters in the best and safest use of pesticides, other agricultural chemicals and other means to assure wholesome food and a clean environment.

8. Payment Limitations

a. So-called multiple entity rules allowing farms to be artificially divided in order to avoid payment limitations should be abolished.

b. We are opposed to the use of commodity certificates or any other means of exceeding payment limitations.

9. Agricultural Data

We support the property rights of all producers in relation to their agricultural data. This includes but is not limited to yield maps, variable rate fertilizer, variable rate seeding, dual hybrid planters, and all livestock data.

D. South Dakota Department of Agriculture (SDDA)

1. Agricultural Services

a. We recommend that the SDDA provide for poultry inspection as a part of the state meat inspection program.

b. We encourage the expansion of the S.D. Pesticide Disposal Program as a way of preventing ground water contamination.

c. We urge the SDDA to continue the voluntary credit counseling service for economically hard-pressed family farmers and ranchers.

d. We support legislation to provide adequate funding for uniform inspection of moisture and protein measuring devices by the SDDA.

e. We urge the legislature to increase funding for insect control and we urge the SDDA to take advantage of federal funds that are available.

f. The SDDA should be adequately funded to enable it to:

i. Research, identify and develop markets for S.D. agricultural products.

ii. Encourage the continual tailoring of S.D. agricultural production to both general and specific market demands.

iii. Promote the processing of S.D. products in S.D.

iv. Conduct ongoing research on marketing, distribution and production and develop recommendations for new policies and institutional mechanisms.

2. Animal Industry Board (AIB)

a. Strong controls are needed to prevent and eradicate livestock and poultry diseases.

b. Domesticated wild animals, birds and dogs should be treated as livestock.

c. We must communicate with the AIB and the state veterinarian in order to ensure affirmative action that will be beneficial to the livestock industry.

d. Horse farms and companion pet breeders should be added to the jurisdiction of the AIB.

3. Brand Board

a. Every member of the brand board must be the owner of a registered brand and elected from districts from which the board members and voters reside.

b. We recommend that a detailed, audited report be submitted to the Legislature on an annual basis.

c. Anyone buying cattle should be given a reasonable length of time to rebrand purchased cattle.

4. Marketing and Research

a. We support SDDA expanding marketing and branding efforts of South Dakota agricultural products.

b. We support expanding research into adapting crops in S.D. and recognize

alternative crops may be viable with further development.

5. Mediation

a. We support continuation of the Farm Credit Mediation Program. It has been demonstrated that this program reduces the number of farm bankruptcy filings and helps to alleviate tensions between lenders and borrowers.

b. We further express our support for Rural Renewal Coalition efforts to expand the mediation program to cover additional areas of conflict involving farmers, ranchers, government agencies and other entities. When one party asks for mediation all parties must participate.

c. Fees ought to be regularly reviewed and reduced if their impact would deny access to the program or jeopardize future federal funding.

6. Office of the Secretary

We support the concept of an elected Secretary of Agriculture.

7. State Fair

a. We support the S.D. State Fair in Huron.

b. We support legislation that would allow the State Fair to keep all sales tax revenues collected on the fairgrounds.

c. We need research to enhance the State Fair.

d. We ask that the Legislature reinstate the voting power of the State Fair Commission.

e. We support the state investing in capital improvements at the State Fair.

f. We support State Fair funding as a line item in the state budget.

III. COOPERATIVES

A. Elections

We recommend that all cooperatives use the secret ballot on controversial issues and

elections and prohibit employees from actively campaigning in any cooperative election.

B. Credit Unions

1. We support the expansion of credit unions.

2. We encourage Farmers Union groups to be aggressive in forming and furthering credit unions and promoting legislation on their behalf.

3. We oppose efforts to tax credit union earnings prior to their allocation to members.

4. We oppose proposals to merge the Credit Union Insurance Fund with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC).

C. Farm Credit System (FCS)

1. The FCS provides a substantial portion of the credit used by American farmers and ranchers.

2. Member control by the democratic process of these cooperative financial institutions is essential to their continued success and survival.

3. We support local control over these key rural lending institutions.

4. We urge that all borrowers be charged the same rate of interest for similar loans.

5. All borrowers should be required to purchase stock in the cooperative.

6. FCS institutions should be required to participate in farm loan mediation programs.

7. We do not support the POA granting to lender on operating notes.

D. Marketing and Promotion

1. We support designating October as Co-op Month.

2. We urge the appropriation of funds to staff a cooperative division in the SDDA capable of promoting cooperatives as required by law;

a. To promote cooperatives.

b. To provide expertise and advice in the establishment of new credit unions and cooperatives.

c. To provide expertise and resources in establishing cooperative goals and to provide information on local demographics for planning.

d. To act as an impartial advisor to financially troubled cooperatives.

3. We strongly urge that the farm cooperative system pursue the development and marketing of grain-based alcohol fuels through its network of local and regional cooperatives to enable producers to retain some control over their commodities.

4. We support development of a program to encourage cooperatives and governmental bodies to organize local collection points for material that can be recycled.

E. Taxation

1. We oppose any governmental action that attempts to dictate the time and manner of returning cooperative patronage earnings or refunds.

2. We strongly support the Capper-Volstead Act and urge Congress to enforce it.

3. Taxation of cooperatives must be consistent with the Federal Internal Revenue Tax Code.

F. Value-Added

1. We strongly support value-added cooperatives.

2. We support the S.D. Value-Added Agriculture Development Center and efforts to build and develop additional farmer-owned, value-added cooperatives in our state. We welcome the fact that more than a dozen other organizations and cooperatives have been willing to join with Farmers Union in providing support for this endeavor. We do, however, believe that many traditional

1 cooperatives could do more in the way of
2 assistance, experience and cooperation for
3 the expansion of new value-added
4 cooperatives.

5 3. We call on the Internal Revenue Service
6 (IRS) and/or Congress to amend any rules
7 preventing farmers from organizing
8 cooperatively to add value to their livestock.

10 **IV. EDUCATION**

12 **A. Ag Education in the Classroom**

14 We support legislation and utilization of
15 agriculture in the classroom in elementary
16 and secondary schools. However,
17 educational materials must be carefully
18 selected and should exclude any literature
19 promoting specific organizations or political
20 points of view.

22 **B. Extension Service**

24 1. We support expansion of extension
25 services at the county level along with well-
26 trained 4-H county advisors.

27 2. Unbiased field specialist expertise and
28 experimental farm research are vital to S.D.

29 3. We encourage continued education of
30 extension personnel and urge reduced tuition
31 for all.

33 **C. Federal**

35 1. We urge Congress to maintain and
36 increase funds available for student loans.

37 2. We believe young people should also be
38 given the option of participating for at least
39 two years in a national service corps as partial
40 or complete repayment of student loans.

41 3. The "Every Student Succeeds" federal
42 education program should be fully funded to
43 implement the federal requirements or
44 eliminated if not fully funded.

45 4. We support federal Perkins funding to
46 local school districts that offer career and
47 technical education curriculum.

48 5. We oppose any cuts of federal funds for
49 special education programs in S.D. school
50 districts.

52 **D. Higher Education**

54 **1. S.D. Board of Regents**

55 a. We recommend that the state legislature
56 and the S.D. Board of Regents as well as
57 academic faculty and administrators direct,
58 divert, and prioritize state legislative
59 appropriations in research funding to our
60 state land grant institutions toward the
61 implementation of research and development
62 of organic farming and alternative uses of our
63 crops.

64 b. We encourage all S.D. colleges and
65 universities to pursue research and grants that
66 would help and enhance the agricultural
67 industry.

69 **2. South Dakota State University (SDSU)**

70 a. We urge SDSU to maintain research
71 independent of bio-technology companies to
72 allow unbiased research.

73 b. We urge SDSU to place greater emphasis
74 on increasing farm and ranch profitability
75 through improved farm management and
76 marketing. We also urge emphasis on courses
77 pertaining to rural life studies which
78 emphasize the contributions made by family
79 farmers and ranchers.

80 c. We urge continued research for USDA at
81 universities to develop better pest control
82 techniques and educational programs to assist
83 farmers and foresters in the best and safest
84 use of pesticides, other agricultural chemicals
85 and other means to assure wholesome food
86 and a clean environment.

88 **3. University of South Dakota (USD)**

89 We encourage USD graduate doctors to stay
90 and practice medicine for ten years in rural

1 S.D. in return for the payment of their entire
2 tuition by the state.

3 4 **4. South Dakota Technical Colleges**

5 We recognize South Dakota Technical
6 Colleges education programs as an important
7 part of agricultural education in South
8 Dakota.

9 10 **E. Public Education**

11
12 1. SDFU has consistently supported our
13 educational system. We strongly recommend
14 the continued support of these institutions of
15 learning in their endeavors to enhance the
16 cultural and economic life of the people of
17 our state and nation.

18 2. We recommend that the percentage of
19 state funding to elementary and secondary
20 public schools general funds be increased,
21 with the formula weighted to benefit small
22 schools.

23 3. The formula for granting monetary aid to
24 students should be based on the need of the
25 individual. Rural school districts should be
26 assured of their fair share of federal and state
27 aid to education. Federal and state
28 educational requirements ought to be funded
29 with federal and state aid.

30 4. We recommend that the “scarcity factor”
31 and the “declining enrollment factor” be
32 given adequate consideration in determining
33 the level of state aid to individual school
34 districts. These are important factors for
35 rural districts where per-pupil busing costs
36 are substantially higher.

37 5. We recommend that elementary and
38 secondary schools periodically evaluate their
39 position on fundamental subjects to keep a
40 strong emphasis on basic education. There
41 should be a limit to the classroom time lost to
42 extracurricular activities by students and
43 teachers.

44 6. We fully support agriculture education,
45 including Family and Consumer Science
46 (FACS), trade and industrial training

47 programs. We recognize that FFA should be
48 considered an intra-curricular part of
49 agriculture education.

50 7. We recommend that cooperative
51 education, farm economics and the
52 importance of the family farm to the
53 economy be included as a part of the
54 curriculum in any free enterprise course in
55 public schools.

56 8. We support adult farm management
57 courses in S.D.

58 9. We support the S.D. Literacy Council and
59 its accomplishments.

60 10. We oppose any unfunded mandates
61 regarding education.

62 11. We support additional state funding to
63 schools that offer career and technical
64 education classes such as agriculture
65 education, family and consumer sciences,
66 and trade and industrial training programs.

67 12. We urge state lawmakers to increase the
68 per-student allocation for English as a second
69 language program (ESL) for students.

70 13. We support the study of Pre-K education
71 and funding in South Dakota.

72 73 **F. South Dakota Board of Education**

74
75 We urge the Board of Education to restore
76 funding support for extended service
77 contracts for agriculture education
78 instructors. Loss of this funding greatly
79 reduces the effectiveness of agriculture
80 education instruction at S.D. high schools
81 and reduces the educational opportunities for
82 students who may not have access to project
83 advice from agriculture education instructors
84 during the key summer months.

85 86 **V. CONSERVATION AND LAND USE**

87 88 **A. Conservation**

89
90 1. We support conservation programs
91 funded at levels that ensure continued
92 protection of our soil, water, and native sod.

2. We favor a paid land diversion program with environmental benefits.

3. Base acres established prior to entering any farm program, or being displaced by natural disasters for multiple years, should be preserved for times when land comes back into production.

4. We urge the state of S.D. to restore a shelter belt incentive program as a means of encouraging the planting and renovation of shelterbelts.

B. Land Use

1. We favor multiple uses of appropriate national forest and other public and private lands to include grazing of livestock and the raw resources industries, commensurate with family-sized farm and ranch operations.

2. We support a comprehensive land use policy that recognizes the objectives of land tenure, promotion of family farms, population distribution, stabilizing farm income and production, conservation of natural resources and providing land for public use.

3. Land use regulation should be left to local government except in situations that lead to multi-county or interstate problems.

4. We oppose the acquisition of productive farmland to extend wildlife habitat. The arbitrary designation of farm units for wildlife mitigation without negotiation with a willing farm operator is disruptive and destructive to the efficiency of family farm management. Land to extend wildlife habitat should be acquired only by short-term lease or rental contract.

5. We urge both governmental and private groups to continue expanding their efforts to take action to rectify pollution problems.

6. We support county commissioners having the final decision on the sale of property to government entities.

8. Eminent Domain

a. We understand that issues of eminent domain are significant for landowners. Every effort should be made to adequately resolve these issues. However, it is important that the welfare of the entire state receive equal consideration.

b. We believe eminent domain should be reserved for public projects. Where eminent domain may eventually be used, individual notification and public hearings must be held before the project is allowed to proceed.

c. We support severance damages including payment for the diminution of remaining land values and increased expenses and inconvenience suffered by affected landowners and operators. After initial court expenses, including attorneys' and appraisers' fees, additional expenses must be borne by the constructing agency in condemnation proceedings.

d. We believe eminent domain consideration should be given to routes that minimize adverse human impact.

e. We call upon federal authorities to resolve eminent domain and environmental impact issues to provide greater competition.

f. We oppose further expansion of eminent domain for private industry and for private use.

g. We oppose the use of eminent domain to exchange property to only increase tax base for state income.

9. Fifth Amendment

a. We support the Fifth Amendment of the United States Constitution which declares that government cannot seize property without just compensation.

b. We urge Congress to define in law "a taking" as any action by the government which deprives citizens of use of their property or reduces the value of that property.

10. Planning and Zoning

a. Any state legislation should recognize that agricultural land must be preserved for the future. Family farmers should be represented in all zoning deliberations.

b. We encourage counties to enact comprehensive land use plans and zoning ordinances to control and regulate the potential expansion of large-scale livestock confinement facilities and cattle feed lots.

c. We oppose any effort to replace county zoning laws with statewide zoning laws.

d. County planning and zoning boards should be made up of a majority of rural residents.

11. Private Property

a. Anyone trespassing on private land should be liable for his or her own action.

b. No person should be allowed on private property using water as access without the landowner's permission.

c. Any state entity that controls public waters that cause damage to private property should be held responsible for returning the property to its original form.

12. Public Lands

a. Rental fees for the lease of state-owned or other public lands for grazing or other agricultural purposes must be consistent with rental fees on private lands in the same area and of equal productivity.

b. When state-owned land is sold, the appraised price per acre must also be consistent with the value of private lands in the same locality and of equal access.

C. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

1. Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

a. We support continuation of CRP.

b. CRP eligibility should be modified to include lands that have been cropped during at least two of the previous 10 years. CRP

eligibility should also be extended to include farmland and pastureland that has been affected by declared weather-related disasters or crop diseases during at least two of the previous 10 years.

c. CRP payments should be established at fiscally-responsible levels and enrollment, or re-enrollment, should target highly-erodible lands with payments based on county average cash rents for highly erodible land. Farmland and pastures that have been flooded for one or more years and cropland that has been repeatedly plagued by disease should also be eligible for enrollment.

d. CRP contracts should continue to be long term.

e. Uniform standards should be applied for enrollment or re-enrollment of land in CRP.

2. Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

While dealing with pollution problems, EQIP assistance should be targeted to family farm agricultural production units with 1,000 animal units or less per site.

3. Watershed and Flood Prevention

a. We urge continued funding of the Small Watersheds Flood Prevention and Conservation Program.

b. Federal funding provided through the NRCS should also be targeted toward reducing erosion along the Missouri River watershed.

D. Mineral Rights

1. All mineral rights should be returned to the owner of the land in 10 years or when land is resold.

2. All mineral rights should be retained by the surface owner.

3. Landowners with severed mineral rights need to be justly compensated and protected.

E. Mining

1. We are categorically opposed to the mining of uranium in S.D. Not only is there a great health risk in the form of potentially hazardous exposure to radioactive mining dust, but there are also considerable additional negative environmental impacts on land and water.

2. We support the adoption and enforcement of a comprehensive strip-mining bill. Our goal must be to ensure the best use of land and to return mined land to its original use.

3. We believe that the beauty of the Black Hills constitutes a natural treasure that must be protected and preserved for the enjoyment of future generations. We, therefore, oppose strip mining of gold and the utilization of mining methods which jeopardize the environment.

F. Oil and Gas

1. We support proper environmental safeguards to protect the economic interests of farmers and ranchers.

2. Full protection should be given during the planning, exploration, development and reclamation from all processes related to oil and gas exploration and development.

3. Land affected by oil and gas exploration and development should be given 10 percent obsolescence from land taxes due to the devaluation of the surface.

4. Mediation for surface damages and reclamation should be under the auspices of the SDDA and should be mandatory if the surface owner requests mediation 90 days from the beginning of negotiations with the oil and gas exploration company.

5. Payments for loss of income and damages to the surface resulting from ongoing oil and gas development should be made annually until total reclamation of the affected surface is complete.

G. Outdoor Recreation

1. We support state statutes requiring landowner permission prior to hunting on private property.

2. We encourage the development of a system to provide a percentage of hunting and fishing license revenues to counties and townships.

3. The authority to set license fees should be returned to the state legislature.

4. Non-resident hunters hunting on preserves should be charged the same out-of-state license fees assessed against other out-of-state hunters.

5. We favor enactment of legislation based on the Wisconsin model prohibiting harassment of hunters by animal rights activists.

6. Road hunting should not be permitted without the adjoining landowner's permission.

7. We urge limiting the ability for a game warden to enter private land to inspect licenses while hunting without landowner's permission unless noticeable violations are occurring.

H. Pipelines

1. We believe that proper environmental safeguards must be implemented and the economic interests of farmers and ranchers be fully protected during the construction and operation of oil or other pipelines.

2. We recommend that appropriate legislation be enacted to ensure pipeline safety and to protect against environmentally damaging leaks.

3. We support all entities domestic or foreign contributing to the super fund.

I. Predator Control

1. It is essential that the federal government establish a program utilizing both federal and

1 state departments of agriculture to control
2 predatory animals. We recognize the need
3 for livestock producers to protect their
4 livestock from predators. We urge the
5 Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and
6 Congress to continue the use of approved
7 practices such as the M-44 Sodium Cyanide
8 capsules and Sodium Fluoroacetate
9 (commonly known as "compound 1080").

10 2. We support a comprehensive review of
11 the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973.

12 3. We urge the legislature to adopt a state
13 bounty on all predators, except endangered
14 species.

16 **J. South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks** 17 **(GFP)**

19 1. GFP should be required to control
20 noxious weeds on lands they own or control.

21 2. The GFP should be more accountable to
22 the state Legislature by placing their budget
23 under the authority of the appropriations
24 committee.

25 3. GFP should be required to pay taxes on
26 their lake access land at the same rate as
27 adjoining agricultural land. All state park
28 lands should be thoroughly investigated as to
29 use or non-use.

30 4. GFP should be authorized to utilize funds
31 earmarked for land acquisition to make
32 necessary repairs on dams located on state-
33 owned or leased property.

34 5. We support legislation to require GFP to
35 offer a free deer and antelope license to each
36 resident landowner with a production unit of
37 160 acres or more.

38 6. We support the idea of a transferable
39 landowner's deer license. The number of
40 licenses would be limited as deemed
41 necessary by the GFP.

42 7. We urge GFP to formulate and
43 implement a plan for the management of the
44 black-tailed prairie dog on state and federal
45 land.

46 8. We urge GFP to manage wildlife and
47 water to reduce depredation and reimburse
48 landowners for depredation.

49 9. We support the Animal Damage Control
50 program.

51 10. We support the election of GFP secretary
52 and commissioners.

54 **K. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACE)**

56 1. We encourage ACE to address the
57 siltation problems behind mainstream
58 Missouri River dams.

59 2. We recommend that the ACE,
60 appropriate conservation districts and the
61 states of Neb. and S.D. work together to
62 resolve erosion and sedimentation problems
63 on the Missouri and Niobrara Rivers.

64 3. We are strongly opposed to the sale of
65 water and waterway user's fees by ACE.

66 4. We support the upgrade of the
67 Mississippi locks and dams' systems.

69 **L. Water**

71 **1. Law**

72 a. We urge adoption of the following order
73 of preference in the use of water: [a] domestic
74 and municipal consumption; [b]
75 hydroelectric power; [c] industrial
76 consumption; [d] irrigation [e] wildlife and
77 recreation, and [f] navigation.

78 b. We agree with the objectives in the water
79 user district law by which S.D. will keep
80 priority rights on water within its boundaries.

82 **2. Rural Water Resource Development** 83 **Program**

84 a. The state of S.D. should have a rural
85 water resource development program
86 wherein:

87 i. The state would provide increased
88 financial assistance for the development of
89 rural water systems.

90 ii. The state would also expand research
91 and technical assistance for developing these

1 systems on an increased cooperative basis to
2 lower the cost.

3 iii. We support establishing a funding
4 program for rural water systems.

5 iv. There should be more stringent
6 inspection of refuse and runoff from cities
7 and towns, as well as from manufacturing
8 and processing plants.

9 10 **3. Rural Water System**

11 We support the S.D. Rural Water systems and
12 full Congressional authorization and funding.

13 14 **4. Watersheds**

15 We support the federal funding for watershed
16 restoration projects.

17 18 **M. Waste**

19
20 1. We strongly urge a safe site be found to
21 establish a hazardous waste disposal site and
22 recognize that disposal of hazardous
23 chemical wastes poses a serious threat to
24 public health and the environment in many
25 areas of the U.S.

26 2. We strongly oppose the establishment of
27 a disposal site for hazardous chemical wastes
28 in S.D.

29 3. We encourage the development of
30 hazardous waste disposal methods, other than
31 landfills, with stricter enforcement of laws on
32 transporting and handling hazardous waste.
33 Our ground water must be safeguarded from
34 contamination.

35 4. We support the waste pesticide collection
36 and pesticide container recycling measures
37 approved by the 1992 S.D. Legislature. These
38 programs, when fully implemented, will help
39 to remove a major threat to our rural
40 environment.

41 5. We support efforts to recycle, reuse, or
42 conserve products and resources when cost
43 effective and environmentally safe.

44 6. We oppose allowing S.D. to become a
45 national center for solid waste disposal.

47 **N. Weed and Pest Control**

48
49 1. We expect the federal government to take
50 steps to control noxious weeds, insects, and
51 other pests on U.S. Forest Service (FS)
52 grazing land, trust land and all land within
53 U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) and
54 waterfowl production areas as well as right-
55 of-way's.

56 2. We urge members to continue to
57 cooperate with township, county and state
58 weed control programs.

59 3. We also support stricter enforcement of
60 present law and the establishment of an
61 expanded educational program at the county
62 level under the county agent's direction.

63 4. We are opposed to legislation to combine
64 weed and pest control boards with those
65 controlling predators.

66 5. We urge support of the Environmental
67 Protection Agency's (EPA) registration
68 review process for all herbicide control
69 chemicals and it must continue to rely on
70 quality controlled and peer-reviewed science
71 as the basis for any outcome.

72 73 **O. Wetlands**

74
75 1. We support preservation of the nation's
76 wetlands. However, jurisdiction and
77 implementation of wetlands programs has
78 been confused and arbitrary and has often
79 violated the rights of landowners.

80 2. Land should only be designated as a
81 wetland if all three criteria [1. hydrology, 2.
82 predominance of hydric soil, and 3. a
83 prevalence of hydrophytic vegetation] are
84 present.

85 3. We support the memorandum of
86 understanding between the USDA, EPA and
87 ACE placing responsibility for designation of
88 agricultural wetlands with the NRCS.

89 4. Arbitrary and excessive penalties
90 mandated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife
91 Service (FWS) have had a devastating impact
92 on farmers. Increased local control and

1 common sense would relieve many of the
2 problems associated with designation and
3 supervision of wetlands.

4 5. Federal regulations should be amended to
5 allow farmers to consolidate wetlands in a
6 given acreage, provided there is no net loss of
7 wetlands in such acreage.

9 **VI. ENERGY AND** 10 **TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

12 **A. Energy**

14 **1. Biodiesel and Ethanol**

15 a. Even if the United States becomes a net
16 oil exporter, our troops will be at risk
17 assuring oil flows freely throughout the
18 world. Creating ethanol blends sweet spot,
19 E30-E50, as a viable alternative to oil,
20 supports our troops.

21 b. We recommend continued congressional
22 vigilance to assure that EPA regulations
23 require use of all ethanol blended fuels.

24 c. Education and research are the keys to a
25 successful transition from our present day
26 petroleum dependency to a future self-
27 sufficiency based on our own renewable
28 resources. We should take every opportunity
29 to dispel lies and misinformation regarding
30 the safety of ethanol.

31 d. We support an ethanol fuel program
32 utilizing low-interest federal loans to farmers
33 and groups of farmers to build ethanol
34 production plants.

35 e. We support the governor for requiring
36 Premium E30 in all state owned, non-flex
37 fuel vehicles.

38 f. We support moving S.D. ethanol market
39 share to 30% by 2024 and 50% by 2028.

40 g. We support continuation of the present
41 combination of state gas tax exemption and
42 producer incentives to encourage further
43 development of the ethanol industry in S.D.
44 We believe producer incentives ought to be
45 made available to all those engaged in
46 ethanol production in S.D.

47 h. We oppose any effort to impose a state tax
48 on corn to fund ethanol producer incentive
49 payments.

50 i. We urge all consumers to make a greater
51 use of higher blends of ethanol and bio-diesel
52 in their motor vehicles when practical.

53 j. We encourage the promotion and use of
54 100/RON clean octane E30 through farmer-
55 owned and branded blender pumps in S.D.
56 We will work with cooperatives and others to
57 assure success through S.D.'s cooperative
58 fuel retailers to offer 100/RON clean octane
59 E30 providing opportunity for fuel
60 efficiency, national security and cleaner air,
61 while also cementing a market place for
62 farmers and the enhancement of rural
63 economies.

65 **2. Development**

66 a. Agriculture is an energy producer and
67 national security improves as domestic
68 energy resources are diversified.
69 Agricultural policy and energy policy should
70 work together effectively.

71 b. Energy policy must be consistent with our
72 system of family agriculture.

73 c. Programs for the development of
74 environmentally friendly renewable energy
75 sources should be conducted, with special
76 emphasis on solar energy, wind energy and
77 bio-based fuels, such as ethanol and bio-
78 diesel.

79 d. Elements of an effective national energy
80 policy include:

81 i. Equitable distribution and efficient
82 development of energy to assure adequate
83 production of food and fiber;

84 ii. Pricing policy which will prevent
85 economic hardship;

86 iii. A massive program to develop
87 renewable sources of energy;

88 iv. Economic assistance for family
89 farmers and ranchers to make agriculture
90 more self-sufficient through increased
91 application of alternative forms of energy.

3. Electricity

a. We support the maintenance of territorial protection for rural electric systems to guarantee access to affordable electric power.

b. We oppose retail wheeling and federally mandated restructuring of the electric utility industry. Retail wheeling would force rural consumers to pay for stranded costs that would result if large customers leave the electric grid and purchase their electricity elsewhere.

c. Rural electric cooperatives have recently acquired broad new capabilities to promote rural economic development. Local rural electric boards should be fully informed of their potential new role in providing credit for new rural development.

d. We oppose mandatory, time-certain deregulation of the electric industry at the federal level. Each state should determine the timing and method of any restructuring or deregulation of electricity.

e. We support development of comprehensive, science-based standards to help producers and utilities work together to detect and mitigate stray voltage. We also support requiring that any testing for stray voltage be completed by a certified professional engineer or certified master electrician.

4. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)

Regulations must be established by the FERC to assure that farmers and ranchers receive adequate supplies of energy necessary to carry on full-scale production despite any breakdown in the distribution system. Increasing taxes would create a hardship on farmers with no effect on reducing consumption.

5. Missouri River Dams

The amortization of the cost of constructing main stem Missouri River dams was established more than three decades ago.

There is no sound economic reason to make any change in this rate structure. The power produced is intended primarily for preference customers who are non-profit bodies such as rural electric cooperatives, public power districts and municipal power systems. We are opposed to any unjustified increases to those rates. The power revenues derived from the mainstream dams are on schedule with the requirements of the Pick-Sloan Act, which established the original criteria.

6. Public Power

a. Publicly-owned resources should, to the greatest extent possible, be developed on a not-for-profit basis. First preference should be given to publicly and cooperatively-owned utilities.

b. We reaffirm our support for the preference clause which provides a preference in the sale of hydropower to cooperatives and public bodies in our belief that public dollars used to provide the benefit of flood control, navigation, irrigation, increased fish and wildlife and recreation, as well as hydropower, should be used for the well-being of the general public and not the stockholders of private utilities.

c. The Western Area Power Administration (WAPA) and other federally-owned Power Marketing Administrations (PMAs) are an essential element in the delivery of affordable electric power to members of rural electric cooperatives and customers of municipally-owned utilities. We strongly oppose any legislation that would result in sale of the PMAs.

d. Many hydropower dams have been built and operated on public domain by private power companies leasing these sites and operating for profit. We urge the DOI to reclaim these sites and facilities upon the termination of leases so that the fullest possible development can be made for the benefit of the power-using public.

e. Any sale of PMAs should give current preference customers the first purchase option.

f. Future power developments on public lands should be under federal government supervision, with retention of the facility by the government and operated in the public interest.

g. We urge legislation to give the Department of Energy authority to supervise public and private power grids and entities, which would prevent blackouts and failure of power facilities.

h. We favor a policy of utility responsibility by the federal government which would assure non-profit power groups the necessary credit and financial support to set up needed generating and transmitting facilities.

7. Rural Electrification Administration (REA)

a. We believe that a strong Rural Utilities Loan Program is vital to the needs of the nation's rural electric cooperatives.

b. We support the REA insured and guaranteed loan programs.

c. We strongly oppose any efforts to "privatize" the REA or federal power marketing agencies.

d. We urge Congress to approve amendments to the Rural Electrification Act which are designed to ensure the continuation of adequate, long-term financing for the nation's rural electric and telecommunications systems provided that lower interest rates are made available to systems serving sparsely settled areas.

8. Transmission

a. We support the development and transmission of electrical power to better serve the farmers and ranchers of this country.

b. We also urge landowner-friendly development of the electrical transmission facilities.

c. We support the cyber protection of our electric grid.

9. Wind Energy

a. We support the development of wind and other alternative energy sources.

b. We urge farmers, ranchers and other landowners to consider the establishment of wind energy cooperatives and/or landowner associations to represent their own interests during the development process. Provisions of wind energy leases should be open for public review.

c. We urge electric companies to purchase wind energy from individuals who set up wind turbines on their own property or those who cooperate to build wind turbines, for the same price that they pay for energy from other sources.

d. We support extending benefits to community wind projects and cooperative investment projects equal to tax credits now offered to wind projects.

e. We support the development of minimum criteria of regulating the development of wind energy.

f. We support designating a portion of all transmission lines in S.D. for wind energy.

g. We request that the name plate revenue collected from wind farms be dedicated to support local public schools.

B. Telecommunications

1. Deregulation

a. Congressional action to further deregulate cable television and other rapidly changing elements of the communications industry must not be allowed to result in the creation of new regional or national monopolies. The clear public interest mandates that we retain strong competition and full access to a broad range of information and opinion. Congressional and U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) attention ought to focus on the potential effects of the

1 latest round of mergers in the
2 communications industry and whether or not
3 those mergers are restraining competition.

4 b. The deregulation of telecommunications
5 services should be approached with extreme
6 care in order to protect the interests of the
7 consuming public.

8 c. No telecommunications service should be
9 deregulated without adequate proof that
10 sufficient competition exists. Every effort
11 must be made to ensure that the goal of
12 universal telecommunications service is not
13 jeopardized and that rural and urban
14 consumers are not subjected to prohibitive
15 rate increases.

16

17 **2. Infrastructure**

18 To serve the best interests of rural
19 communities of S.D., we encourage
20 investment in infrastructure to improve
21 telecommunication delivery systems in our
22 state.

23

24 **3. Rates**

25 The addition of new telecommunications
26 service providers may have helped to lower
27 rates, but it has also led to an increase in
28 reports of unscrupulous practices, such as
29 switching providers for consumers without
30 their knowledge or written approval. We
31 request that Congress and appropriate
32 regulatory agencies take whatever action is
33 necessary to protect the interests of
34 consumers and prosecute companies or
35 individuals found guilty of fraudulent acts.

36

37 **4. South Dakota Public Utilities 38 Commission (PUC)**

39 a. We believe that the PUC should be
40 provided with adequate personnel and
41 funding to ensure proper protection of the
42 interests of consumers.

43 b. The regulatory powers of the PUC should
44 not be tampered with unless it can be clearly
45 demonstrated that such action is in the best
46 interests of the people of S.D.

47 c. We strongly support continued regulatory
48 oversight of the telecommunications industry
49 by the PUC.

50 d. We urge the PUC to order that all
51 telephone exchanges in S.D. discontinue
52 zone rate charges in favor of an equal rate for
53 all rural customers.

54

55 **5. Universal Service Fund (USF)**

56 a. We support the continuation of the USF
57 for rural telecommunications cooperatives.

58 b. To serve high-cost areas with affordable,
59 state of the art telecommunication services,
60 we encourage the full funding of the USF.

61

62 **VII. ECONOMICS**

63

64 **A. Anti-Monopoly Policies**

65

66 1. We believe that monopolistic
67 concentration in the meat packing,
68 transportation, energy, and seed industries
69 has reduced competition to a point where
70 producers no longer have access to fair and
71 equitable markets.

72 2. We support a full federal investigation of
73 the effects of concentration in the
74 transportation industry, especially rail
75 transportation.

76 3. We support anti-trust action to increase
77 competition in the private sector of energy
78 industries.

79 4. We support implementation of temporary
80 moratorium on large agricultural mergers.
81 The moratorium is necessary to provide
82 Congress with time to review current law and
83 strengthen it as appropriate to restore market
84 competition for producers and consumers.

85 5. We urge that a national conference be
86 held to include representatives of farmers,
87 ranchers, consumers and organized labor in
88 an effort to eliminate monopolistic practices
89 in the food industry.

90 6. We support legislation to prohibit
91 ownership or control of feedlots by meat
92 packing firms.

1 7. We oppose ownership of livestock by
2 packing firms except for the reason of
3 immediate slaughter.

4 8. We favor a full-scale congressional
5 investigation of unjustified industry spread
6 between producer and consumer prices.

7 9. We support passage of legislation that
8 would repeal the adverse impact of the U.S.
9 Supreme Court's decision in the Illinois
10 Brick Case and allow producers and
11 consumers to bring anti-trust actions whether
12 damages were direct or indirect.

14 **B. Federal Reserve Board**

16 The Federal Reserve Board should be
17 reconstituted to include representatives of
18 agriculture, small business and labor.

20 **C. Loans**

22 1. Feed grain loan rates should be increased
23 to better reflect their renewable energy value.

24 2. Loan rates should be based on the cost of
25 production. The county base yields should be
26 updated.

27 3. We oppose the sale of federally-financed
28 loans at a discounted rate unless the
29 individual or entity affected has the right of
30 first refusal to purchase their loan at the
31 established discount rate.

33 **D. Fees and Licenses**

35 We urge Congress to immediately investigate
36 the imposition of excessive technological
37 fees assessed against farmers.

39 **E. National Debt**

41 a. Reforms in our inequitable tax structure are
42 essential if we are to reduce the national debt.

43 b. Farmers are not a major cause of the rising
44 national debt. A lower national debt can be
45 realized as farmers become more reliant on
46 their own management abilities through

47 programs such as IMSET and use of
48 100/RON clean octane E30.

50 **F. Producer Income**

52 We oppose any budgetary proposals that
53 would result in a direct or indirect loss of net
54 farm income to family farmers and ranchers.

56 **G. Rural Development**

58 1. We support economic development for
59 rural SD communities by adding value to
60 agriculture production by family farmers.

61 2. We support the S.D. Board of Economic
62 Development.

63 3. We believe that any program seriously
64 proposing to boost adding value to grain and
65 livestock production in S.D. must receive
66 interest rates that are at least comparable to
67 those available to businesses through the
68 Governor's Office of Economic
69 Development (GOED) Revolving Economic
70 Development and Initiative (REDI) Fund.
71 Interest rates of more than six percent are
72 unacceptable.

73 4. We support the expanded use of the REDI
74 Fund by S.D. family farmers and ranchers.
75 These changes also recognize that rural
76 people paid a disproportionate share of the
77 one-cent sales tax increase.

78 5. We urge greater use of the value-added
79 sub fund.

80 6. We support continued S.D. funding for
81 the Northern Crops Institute.

82 7. We pledge our cooperation and support
83 for the legislative Rural Renewal Coalition.

84 8. We support establishment of venture
85 capital groups for producer-owned
86 businesses.

87 9. We support continued statewide efforts to
88 promote increases in state processing of
89 agricultural products. These efforts should
90 include cooperation with farmers, ranchers
91 and their organizations in promoting and

constructing cooperatively-owned processing plants in S.D.

10. We support the establishment of enterprise communities and empowerment zones as a means of assisting development in economically disadvantaged rural areas.

11. We continue to support local rural development entities that work to expand opportunities for local communities.

12. We urge the appropriation of public and private funds for the establishment of an enterprise facilitation program. Facilitation programs should be able to apply and receive rural development funds.

13. We support efforts to increase affordable housing in the rural communities.

H. Taxation

1. Carbon Carrier Pipeline Tax

We support a tax on carbon carrier pipelines for S.D.

2. Contractor's Excise Tax

We urge repeal of the contractor's excise tax and replaced with a corporate income tax. S.D. is currently the only state in the union to impose this form of pyramiding taxation.

3. Excess-Profits Tax

An excess-profits tax should be levied on those corporations whose profits are clearly out of line with reasonable rate of return on invested capital.

4. Federal Estate Tax

We support a 35 percent estate tax after exempting the first \$10 million.

5. Income Tax

a. We believe that personal and corporate income taxes ought to be a part of a balanced state tax structure. The goal of reform should be a structure wherein state and local tax revenues are raised approximately one-third

from property taxes, one-third from sales taxes and one-third from income taxes.

b. We support the federal income tax deductibility of 100 percent of health insurance premium and health care costs for self-employed persons.

c. To relieve property taxes in S.D. and to provide for a more equitable sharing of the costs of education, we favor state enactment of a graduated personal income tax and a corporate profits tax.

d. A state income tax should be simple, have a low administrative cost, be based on net income from the federal income tax form, with all revenues going to education and for real estate tax relief.

6. Investment Tax Credit

We urge that the investment tax credit be reinstated at an incremental level beneficial to family farmers and small businesses.

7. Mineral Severance Taxes

a. Mineral rights held by non-surface owners should be made subject to a mineral tax with revenues designated for purposes of property tax relief to the surface owner. Severed mineral rights have value and are benefited from state and county roads.

b. South Dakota's non-renewable natural resources are being severed from our state and lost forever. We firmly believe that those business firms engaged in this practice must adequately compensate our state for severed resources.

8. Motor Fuel Taxes

a. We continue our long-term support for an exemption from the state gas tax at the time of delivery for non-highway users.

b. We recognize that a certain portion of gas tax revenue is directly attributable to boating. Expenditure of these revenues should be confined to the construction or enhancement of public facilities.

1 c. We oppose any legislation authorizing
2 enactment of city gas taxes.

3 d. We oppose any new increase in fuel tax
4 for roads without an adequate amount of the
5 proceeds going to counties and townships.

6 e. We encourage any license fee increase
7 for vehicles over 5 years old to be retained in
8 the county.

9

10 **9. Property Taxes**

11 a. S.D.'s over-reliance on property taxes for
12 funding primary and secondary education has
13 placed an unfair burden on agriculture and
14 contributed to the economic depression that
15 confronts many rural communities.

16 b. To achieve fairness and equality, the
17 assessments on agriculture land should be
18 based on the capability to produce, land use,
19 terrain, climate, location, soil type, and actual
20 use.

21 c. We continue to support efforts to
22 establish limitations in future property tax
23 increases.

24 d. We urge a full review of recent major
25 reductions in valuations and assessments for
26 centrally-assessed property including that
27 which is owned by utilities. These reductions
28 have shifted an even greater property tax
29 burden onto agricultural, other business and
30 residential property.

31 e. We urge the state legislature to rewrite
32 policy directing the 25 percent property tax
33 reduction to South Dakotans most in need of
34 property tax relief. Specifically, we suggest
35 the establishment of a homestead exemption.

36 f. We oppose any action to reinstitute the
37 personal property tax.

38 g. Federal and state government and Indian
39 lands should be required to pay an amount in
40 lieu of taxes equal to the amount of real estate
41 taxes paid on similar private lands in each
42 county.

43 h. We support a sellers' fee assessed on
44 property sales to be distributed on a local
45 level.

46 i. We are opposed to frontage roadway
47 assessment in rural areas.

48 j. We oppose a shift in capital outlay funds
49 to general funds for education.

50

51 **10. Sales Tax**

52 a. We urge that the deductibility of state
53 sales taxes be restored to the federal tax code.

54 b. We are opposed to the imposition of a
55 national value-added, general sales tax,
56 manufacturer's tax, or any other similar tax.

57 c. We are opposed to the sales tax monthly
58 remittance procedures presently in existence
59 due to the extra burden that has been placed
60 on small businesses.

61 d. We favor legislation that will eliminate
62 the state sales tax on food, used agricultural
63 machinery, and general farm repairs.

64 e. The spread of the city sales tax has made
65 rural people victims of taxation without
66 representation. We regard the city sales tax as
67 a regressive, unfair and unacceptable means
68 of funding local property tax relief. We
69 continue to oppose all city sales taxes unless
70 purchases by non-resident, rural citizens can
71 be exempted.

72 f. We oppose any permissive legislation
73 authorizing enactment of county sales taxes
74 without county voter approval.

75 g. We strongly oppose any expansion of
76 state sales and use taxes that do not include
77 exemptions for grocery store food and
78 clothing, and is not specifically earmarked
79 for education.

80 h. We support the reinstatement of sales tax
81 exemptions for personal property sold at
82 auction, newspaper sales and subscriptions,
83 cattle semen, amateur sports officiating,
84 veterinary services, state and county fair
85 parking and the exchange of processed for
86 raw agricultural products.

87

88 **11. Tax Code**

89 a. We support eliminating some unjustified
90 loopholes that allow wealthy individuals and

corporations to escape their fair share of the federal tax load.

b. Income averaging is a necessary tax provision for agriculture and other businesses characterized by instability of economic return. Income averaging should continue as an element of federal tax policy.

c. Every effort should be made to restore an enhanced degree of progressivity to the tax code by increasing the number of brackets and increasing the maximum tax rate for the wealthy.

d. Foundations and churches should be taxed while engaging in commercial, profit-making activities.

e. We believe in equitable tax treatment for all businesses. We, therefore, support the right of state governments to collect sales taxes on Internet and catalog sales.

f. Alien owners of U.S. farmland and other property should be subject to the same taxes as domestic owners.

12. Water Tax

a. We oppose any state tax on water use and/or water permits.

b. We urge repeal of state statutes requiring fees for water rights permit on land developed for water spreading to ensure that its population will always have safe, clean water for human and livestock use.

13. Tax Freezes

We urge the legislature to repeal all tax freezes on schools, counties, and townships. Local governments have more of an understanding of their needs rather than the legislators of the state.

14. Trust Fund Tax

The SD legislature should review trust fund laws for relief of taxation for education, health care and property tax.

VIII. PUBLIC AFFAIRS

A. Agricultural Practices

1. Corporate Farming

We believe that Congress should enact legislation requiring investor-owned, non-family farm corporations to divest their holdings in agricultural properties. We call on the USDA and the DOJ to conduct a full and complete study of the extent to which outright corporate ownership and contract production have limited the market access of independent family farmers. Once the facts have been determined, we call upon Congress to pursue all appropriate remedies.

2. Land Ownership

a. We believe that continued ownership and control of U.S. agricultural land by family farmers and ranchers is vital to the moral and economic welfare of this nation. We strongly support constitutional restrictions on non-family farm or ranch corporate ownership of agricultural land and livestock. We urge like-minded organizations to continue regional and national cooperation to enact or strengthen anti-corporate farm legislation.

b. We continue to support existing statutory restrictions that limit the ownership of agricultural land by individual, non-resident aliens to 160 acres.

c. We urge Congress to prohibit the sale of farmland in the FSA inventory to non-resident foreign investors.

d. We support either of the following: a buffer of 6 foot to prevent livestock enticement or the nullification of liability for the livestock producer for any trespassing damages on non-buffered fence lines.

3. Sustainable Agriculture

We support farm bill provisions making agriculture more sustainable and productive.

1 **B. Consumer Protection**

2
3 1. We favor strengthening the S.D. Division
4 of Consumer Protection through better
5 funding and adequate staffing.

6 2. We reject the sale of private browser
7 history under the Browser Act of 2017 and
8 request its repeal.

9
10 **C. Corporations**

11
12 1. We support legislation to prohibit
13 corporations from developing or selling seed
14 that contains a terminator gene and, thus,
15 cannot reproduce.

16 2. We denounce all actions and
17 governments which promote the welfare of
18 multi-national corporations and holders of
19 extreme wealth at the expense of the
20 American people.

21 3. We support legislation that would prevent
22 subsidy payments to foreign owned entities.

23 4. Due to the fact that the Supreme Court
24 never ruled that corporations were granted
25 the rights of natural persons in the 14th
26 Amendment and corporations are persons of
27 the artificial sort, corporations should only be
28 granted rights specifically granted by the
29 Secretary of State's filing.

30
31 **D. Substance Abuse and Addiction**

32
33 1. We demand stricter penalties for those
34 convicted of selling Federal schedule 1
35 substances.

36 2. We advocate further education on the
37 problem of drug abuse.

38 3. We support the ability for individuals
39 with an addiction to participate in voluntary
40 recovery programs, without incurring police
41 records.

42 4. We support evidence based prevention
43 treatment efforts to reduce illegal substance
44 use, addiction and suicide.

47 **E. Gambling**

48
49 1. We oppose further increases in bet limits
50 or the number of slot machines or video
51 lottery machines allowed in each
52 establishment.

53 2. The state's share of gambling revenue
54 should be increased and used for property tax
55 relief only.

56 3. We advocate an "off the top" percentage
57 from state- and federally-sanctioned
58 gambling. These funds should be earmarked
59 for law enforcement and social problems
60 attributed to the gambling industry.

61 4. All tribal gambling casinos must be
62 within the borders of a reservation and on
63 tribally owned land.

64 5. We encourage the state of S.D. to conduct
65 a study to determine the social costs of
66 gambling in our state.

67
68 **F. Governmental Reform**

69
70 **1. Campaign Finance**

71 a. We support comprehensive campaign
72 finance reform including:

73 i. Presidential candidates should
74 continue to receive matching federal funds
75 for campaign expenses. Similar financial
76 assistance should also be provided to
77 candidates for the U.S. House of
78 Representatives and U.S. Senate.

79 ii. Contributions from individuals
80 should be limited to \$1,000 per candidate.
81 Contributions by each Political Action
82 Committee (PAC) should be limited to
83 \$5,000 per candidate

84 iii. Caps should be instituted on total
85 campaign spending.

86 iv. All types of campaign contributions
87 should be fully reported.

88 v. We support eventual shift to public
89 financing and elimination of PACs.

90 b. We urge ethics legislation at the state
91 level that would result in more in depth

1 investigation of where campaign funds
2 originate and how they are used.
3 c. We recommend legislation to place
4 reasonable limits on campaign spending and
5 the length of campaigns. Elimination of soft
6 money contributions should be a top priority.
7 d. We support a progressive sales tax on
8 campaign spending based on what the elected
9 office holder receives for that office.
10 Initiatives and referendums are based on
11 what SD voters contribute.
12 e. We are opposed to the ruling by the U.S.
13 Supreme Court that makes it possible for a
14 corporation to be considered as an
15 “individual” regarding campaign
16 contributions.

17

18 **2. Civil Liberties**

19 a. It shall be our purpose to seek to preserve
20 and broaden the civil liberties and rights of all
21 the people. The demands of the Declaration
22 of Independence and the safeguards
23 guaranteed to the people by the Constitution
24 and its Bill of Rights and subsequent
25 amendments must be made a code of conduct
26 for our nation.

27 b. We shall oppose those persons or forces
28 which seek to abridge, abrogate, or eliminate
29 any of our civil rights and liberties.

30

31 **3. Discrimination**

32 We shall continue to seek as individuals and
33 as an organization to remove every remaining
34 vestige of discrimination in any government
35 agency whenever and wherever it may arise.

36

37 **4. Elected Officials**

38 a. We support legislation requiring
39 complete disclosure of income and sources of
40 income by legislators and other elected
41 public officials.

42 b. We oppose any merger of constitutional
43 offices.

44

45

46

47 **5. Elections**

48 a. All electronic voting machines shall have
49 a paper record to verify the votes.

50 b. We urge that no unnecessary restrictions
51 be placed on voter registration or the right of
52 citizens to vote by absentee ballot.

53 c. We urge strong enforcement of the
54 Voting Rights Act.

55 d. We oppose any actions to increase the
56 number of signatures required to initiate or
57 refer a law.

58 e. Recent rule changes regarding circulation
59 and signing of initiative, referendum and
60 candidate petitions complicate the process
61 and discourage participation by citizens. We
62 urge repeal of rules requiring anything more
63 than printing of name, signature, address or
64 box number and date of signing.

65 f. We favor legislation to require full
66 disclosure of federal tax returns by
67 candidates for state constitutional offices and
68 the state Legislature at least two months
69 before the general election.

70 g. We support whatever constitutional or
71 other action is necessary to restore the right
72 of citizens to initiate or refer measures that
73 include state revenue.

74 h. We oppose any effort to reduce the
75 required percentage of voter approval in local
76 bond issue elections.

77 i. We support keeping all local voting rolls,
78 including names, addresses, voting records,
79 social security numbers, from becoming
80 public record.

81

82 **6. Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA)**

83 We support any efforts to bring substantive
84 reform to the EAJA.

85

86 **7. Line Item Veto**

87 We oppose the line item veto.

88

89 **8. S.D. State Legislature**

90 a. We are opposed to changing the
91 legislature to a unicameral or single-house
92 body.

b. We support legislation to elect state senators for a four-year term.

c. We support some form of compensation to legislators performing legislative related duties on weekends and when the Legislature is not actually in session.

d. We support repeal of the so-called S.D. ‘gag law.’ Under the guise of preserving confidentiality, this legislation has allowed government to conceal the public’s business from the public.

e. We support establishing a non-partisan redistricting body and single member house districts statewide.

f. We support legislation requiring all registered lobbyists to fully report all fees and compensation which they receive for their legislative activity.

9. State Agencies

a. We ask that the tax advocate position in state government be taken away from the S.D. Department of Revenue and be placed under the S.D. Department of Legislative Audit.

b. We urge that all state-purchased vehicles and equipment be manufactured in the U.S.

10. Tort Law

We strongly support tort reform.

G. Health Care

1. We support a comprehensive, universal, national, prepaid health care and medical facilities insurance program. This program should enable every citizen to receive fully adequate medical, dental, hospital, chiropractic and other health care services, including treatment for alcoholism, drug addiction, mental illness, and prescription drugs. This program should also include preventative health care services.

2. We recommend a careful study of health care systems in other states and nations.

3. We support the single payer system.

4. We support hospice care for the terminally ill.

5. We continue to support the “division of assets” concept.

6. We support assisted living and minimum-care homes for those people who do not require the care of nursing homes.

7. It has been proven that preventative health care can reduce the overall cost of the health care system. Insurers should be required to cover the full cost of regular check-ups.

8. We support the inclusion of reasonable chiropractic care in any state healthcare plan.

9. We support an expansion of a risk pool for uninsurable South Dakotans. We view this as a necessary step toward enactment of a comprehensive, universal state health care reform program.

10. We urge that any national or state health reform plans maintain rural access and cost containment as important priorities.

11. We support legislation that would allow American pharmacists and distributors to import prescription drugs approved by the FDA and sell them at more affordable prices.

12. We urge the U.S. government and health care providers to negotiate with drug manufacturers to make prescription drug prices more in line with those that are available in other countries.

13. We urge substantially increased federal appropriations for research on all major diseases and for study of prevention and effective treatment of mental illness.

14. We support 100 percent deductibility for health insurance premiums to include all health care costs.

15. We demand that Congress limit the ability of health insurance companies to dictate length of stay or possible hospital procedures.

16. We support a patient’s right to choose their medical provider.

17. We support elimination of discriminatory pricing of prescription drugs.

18. The definition of “group” should be expanded to make group policies available to all people.

19. We support the establishment of a self funding cooperative movement for health insurance.

H. Mental Health

1. We support public and private programs to incentivize mental health and addiction professionals to move to and practice in rural communities

2. We support full mental health care coverage by insurance groups.

3. We support increased mental health care availability in our public schools.

I. Humanitarian Aid

We recognize that children constitute our greatest asset and we support nutritional, educational and financial assistance programs targeted to improving the current welfare and future opportunities for all children.

J. Medicaid and Medicare

1. We support larger reimbursements from our state for Medicaid residents of long-term care facilities.

2. We support federal legislation aimed at providing equal coverage of Medicare reimbursement procedures in order that vital rural medical facilities may survive.

3. We regard the method of classifying Medicare patients under the Diagnostic Related Groups (DRG) policy as an insult to our older citizens. We recognize the necessity of controlling increases in Medicare and other health care costs, but a policy that forces hospitals to discharge Medicare patients once their Medicare eligibility has run out is wrong. Patients in need of further medical care should be

allowed to remain in the hospital with expenses paid through Medicare supplemental insurance or in cash.

4. We recommend that the time period for changing the medications or prices paid by insurance companies and the time period for an individual to change an insurance carrier shall be the same.

K. Nutrition

1. We deplore reductions in domestic food utilization and distribution programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), school lunches, Woman, Infants and Children (WIC) programs, elderly nutrition programs, and summer food service programs, which will assist people in obtaining sufficient food to meet their nutritional needs, including donated meat that is processed at a state inspected facility.

2. We call upon the administration to expand the school milk and school lunch programs to every school child. Reduction of surpluses and improved child nutrition would be advanced by offering school children additional cartons of milk.

3. Federal agencies should be prohibited from using imported commodities in school lunch and other organization programs.

4. We oppose federally-mandated nutrition standards for school lunches that replace long accepted health standards with menu choices that reduce or eliminate meat and dairy products.

5. Federally-owned surplus commodities should be utilized in the school lunch and summer food service programs.

6. We feel the USDA should use all authorities it has, including donations, to dispense of any excess commodities to those people, both domestic and worldwide, who are in need.

1 **L. Occupational Safety and Health**
2 **Administration (OSHA)**

3
4 We endorse the concept of the federal OSHA
5 because of the importance of providing safe
6 and healthful working conditions. Due
7 process of law must be guaranteed in
8 determining guilt and assessing fines.

9
10 **M. Retirement System**

11
12 1. We ask that the present retirement system
13 for elected officials [President, Vice
14 President and Congress] be made more
15 equitable within the level of the Social
16 Security formula.

17 2. We encourage individual, personal
18 retirement plans.

19
20 **N. Seniors**

21 We advocate the continuation and expansion
22 of experience works service, visiting
23 neighbor, mini-bus, senior nutrition, meals-
24 on-wheels and other programs to enable
25 senior citizens to retain their independence.

26
27 **O. Social Security**

28 1. We believe in a strong Social Security
29 system in the U.S. We recommend that:

30 a. Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA)
31 must be recalculated to include real-world
32 expenses. Simply pinning COLA to the rate
33 of inflation is an inefficient and detrimental
34 method; necessities such as food, fuel,
35 prescription medication, health care, and
36 insurance must be included.

37 b. Dependents of beneficiaries should
38 receive support through four years of college.

39 c. Aid to disabled persons between the ages
40 of 18 and 55 should not be contingent upon
41 the economic status of the spouse, parents or
42 other relatives.

43 d. For purposes of Social Security benefits,
44 we recommend the same formula be used to
45 determine the amount of benefits regardless
46 of the year of birth. Discrimination against

47 so-called "notch people" should be
48 abolished. A reasonable limit should be
49 placed on the earned and unearned income of
50 retired persons or widows with dependent
51 children.

52 2. We urge the Social Security
53 Administration (SSA) to determine the
54 number of farm women who are not covered
55 by Social Security. We also urge the SSA
56 and NFU to dispense information on how
57 these farm women may qualify for coverage
58 under Social Security.

59 3. We recommend that federal matching
60 funds, equal to the annual contributions by
61 and on behalf of individuals, be appropriated
62 to the Social Security Fund. Social Security
63 taxes should be paid on unearned as well as
64 earned income with Social Security payments
65 being the only exception.

66 4. We oppose the use of Social Security
67 funds for purposes other than Social Security
68 benefits, such as private plans.

69 5. We recommend that married couples
70 filing joint income tax returns shall have their
71 Social Security payments pooled, regardless
72 of the source of income from which the
73 payment is derived. This is, however, not to
74 exceed the limitations now in effect.

75
76 **P. South Dakota Public Broadcasting**
77 **(SDPB)**

78
79 1. Reductions in federal and state funding
80 threaten the survival of quality radio and
81 television programming that we have come to
82 expect from SDPB.

83 2. We support efforts to restore funding for
84 these educational programs.

85 3. We particularly support continuation of
86 agriculturally oriented programming.

Q. Transportation

1. Highways

a. We urge the federal government to allocate sufficient funds for highway construction and maintenance in S.D.

b. We strongly oppose any proposals to lessen the historical congressional commitments for funding to support rural America's secondary and farm-to-market highway systems.

c. We oppose any further increase in federal motor fuel taxes that is not specifically targeted at improving and maintaining the nation's transportation system.

d. We urge continued cooperation to promote highway safety in order to reduce the present death toll from accidents.

e. All state highway intersections should have turning lanes installed for the safety of motorists.

f. Grain combines often must move on state highways on weekends during peak harvest season and should be granted this privilege where necessary.

g. We urge the S.D. Department of Transportation (SDDOT) to make a greater effort to ensure the safety of rural S.D. by having well-lit state highway intersections.

h. We support and encourage legislation which helps fund rural county and township highways, bridges, and culverts for the purpose of safety and maintenance of the farm to market system to sustain economic health of rural South Dakota. An adequate highway system, including farm-to-market roads, is essential to the economic health and well-being of S.D.

i. We support federal highway funding aid for secondary roads and bridge repair.

j. All efforts should be made to reduce unnecessary damage to S.D. highways and secondary roads. However, we strongly oppose any effort to allow law enforcement officials to obtain elevator weight tickets without a search warrant and to retroactively

charge truckers with weight violations. Any legislation to alter load limits or legal trailer length should include provisions to allow current operators a sufficient grace period to comply with the law.

2. Railroads

a. We continue to support the S.D. State Rail Authority and efforts to preserve and rebuild all aspects of our rail system. Local transportation districts should receive all possible assistance from state and federal governments.

b. We support the concept of cooperative or other local ownership of railroad lines.

c. The state of S.D. should consult with surrounding states so that efforts to restore or preserve rail service can be coordinated wherever possible.

d. Currently, grain elevators and other businesses located on the state-owned railroad property which depend on rail service for their business are required to repair tracks on sidings at their own expense, even though they have no equity or ownership in the tracks or right-of-way property. We support changes in state law that would allow businesses using the tracks to reimburse the state for repairs over a reasonable period of time.

e. Shippers captive to a single rail line should be protected from excessive rates and healthy competition among railroads should be encouraged.

f. We urge legislation allowing adjoining landowners to initiate a process of abandoned railroad right-of-way to convert to adjoining land.

g. Landowners adjoining abandoned railroad lines should have first right of refusal to purchase the property.

h. We urge legislation requiring reflectorizing of the sides of railroad cars. Lights on business structures should be regulated so they do not interfere with traffic.

R. U.S. Postal Service (USPS)

1. We are strongly opposed to any proposal which would result in the sale or transfer of the USPS to private business. The USPS was established as a national responsibility more than 200 years ago and that is what it should remain.

2. We deplore USPS cutbacks in service in rural areas.

3. We oppose any further closings of post offices, processing centers and reductions in service to rural people.

4. We believe that postal service is a right and not a privilege. We believe, therefore, that the USPS should not be required by law to be a self-supporting institution, especially if that status results in oppressive increases in postal rates and reduction of services.

5. We support allowing the USPS to fund its pension similarly to private enterprise.

S. Veterans

1. The nation must honor all promises of rights and benefits made to veterans.

2. We especially advocate the continued availability of medical services for all honorably discharged veterans through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) hospitals.

3. We ask that the burial expense for all veterans be reinstated.

4. Provision of services should not be contingent on economic status of the veteran.

5. We oppose the shifting of guaranteed veterans' home loans from one bank to another to facilitate certain banks getting out of such loans in agricultural communities.

6. We encourage all nursing homes to have the right to admit veterans with the same benefits they have at a VA hospital.

T. Working People

1. We support legislation that allows all people to earn a living wage.

2. It is our belief there should be communication between agriculture and labor on matters of vital interest to both.

3. We support the rights of youth to work and participate in all agricultural activities.

4. We believe in a strong federal immigration policy, but do not support the hiring of illegal workers.

5. We believe in a guest worker program that supports the hiring of reliable agricultural workers. This policy should be a coherent, viable, effective worker program.

6. We support reforms to the visa system to make it responsive to the needs of our economy and businesses, with a focus on public safety as well as protecting the interests of the workers.

7. We believe that serious attention should be given to the proposal to require worker's compensation for hired farm workers and that any such law should provide for exemptions for short-term or seasonal farm workers.

8. We oppose any undue state burdens that may inhibit the ability for the agricultural industry to employ an adequate work force.

IX. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

A. Aid

1. Foreign aid has been of great assistance to emerging democracies and other underprivileged nations. Provision of foreign aid must never be contingent upon a country's acceptance of private American investment capital. U.S. financial aid should be used to buy products made in the U.S. when possible.

2. Farmer-to-farmer programs, Public Law 480 and other international assistance programs have had positive benefits around the world. We support necessary

1 improvements in their delivery system, but
2 oppose termination.

3 3. Employee Education Program (EEP)
4 assistance ought to be retargeted toward
5 movement of value-added rather than raw
6 agricultural products.

7 4. We advocate the promotion of economic
8 and agricultural development in food-
9 deficient countries, and we ask for expanded
10 use of the long-term loan authority of the
11 Food for Peace Act.

12 5. We support the international school lunch
13 program as proposed by former Senators
14 George McGovern and Robert Dole.
15 American food and fiber programs must not
16 be used as foreign policy weapons.

17 **B. Embargos**

18
19
20 Agricultural products should be exempt from
21 all embargoes.

22 **C. Imports**

23
24
25 1. We demand that all agricultural products
26 imported to this country be required to meet
27 the same standards of sanitation required of
28 American agricultural products and labeled
29 as to point of origin. We are especially
30 concerned about lapses that have allowed
31 foreign beef to enter the U.S. through Canada
32 or Mexico with inadequate or no inspection.
33 We strongly oppose new USDA food safety
34 provisions, which would transfer
35 responsibility for meat inspections to
36 individual meat packers.

37 2. We urge the USDA and all relevant
38 federal agencies to make every effort to
39 assure that Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD)
40 and BSE are kept out of the U.S. These
41 efforts should include a ban on the
42 importation of all animal products from
43 nations or regions that are not certified free of
44 these diseases.

45 3. We oppose the rule allowing live animals
46 over the age of 30 months to be imported for
47 slaughter and breeding in the U.S.

48 **D. Military Armaments**

49
50
51 We support continuation of arms control
52 negotiations between all nations.

53 **E. Peace Corps**

54
55
56 We urge the continuation and expansion of
57 the Peace Corps program.

58 **F. Trade Negotiations**

59
60
61 1. We oppose any kind of "Trade Promotion
62 Authority" legislation for free-trade
63 agreements, and urge Congress to vote on
64 each package. In order for these trade
65 agreements to be fair, factors such as labor
66 standards, growing practices, differing
67 currency exchange rates and food safety
68 regulations must be taken into account. In
69 any free-trade agreement negotiation, the
70 U.S. Representatives should create a
71 commodity-by-commodity breakdown of the
72 effect that the agreement will have on the
73 U.S. agriculture industry.

74 2. We respect all nations' sovereignty and
75 food policies and thus urge open dialogue,
76 cooperation and understanding in trade
77 negotiations relating to biotechnology.

78 **G. United Nations (UN)**

79
80
81 1. We endorse the original concept behind
82 the UN. We believe that it must continue to
83 serve as a forum for countries of the world to
84 seek peaceful relations with each other. The
85 UN or any other world court should never
86 take precedence over or be superior to the
87 Constitution of the U.S. or the Bill of Rights.
88 2. We support the World Food Program of
89 the Food and Agriculture Organization

(FAO), and we ask that technical assistance for various UN programs be expanded.

3. We support the recognition and activities of World Food Day. International food security would be enhanced by the establishment of a UN Strategic Grain Reserve. This reserve should be financed by member nations according to their ability to pay and located in the major grain producing nations. The reserve should be sufficient to meet expected international emergencies.

X. APPENDIX

A. Membership

1. A large membership of family farmers and ranchers is the base of a strong, respected and influential SDFU. Among the benefits of membership in the Farmers Union are:

a. The right to full participation in activities and policy-making decisions and the right to election as an officer or delegate to state and national conventions.

b. Participation in the Farmers Union youth and other educational activities and conferences.

c. A subscription to the South Dakota Union Farmer, the official publication of the state organization.

d. We encourage all Farmers Union Insurance policy holders to become members and for members to buy Farmers Union Insurance.

e. Eligibility for membership in the Traveler's Motor Club

f. Membership incentive programs for transportation and lodging to the NFU Convention. We encourage county organizations to actively seek associate members (non-voting).

2. All local, county and district Farmers Union organizations should have a full set of active action officials. Active officers provide greater membership participation and education. They should establish good

public relations with local newspapers, coordinate membership drives and turn in financial reports at the end of the fiscal year.

3. We encourage continued joint efforts with all farm organizations.

4. We will furnish transportation for one director or manager of a cooperative with membership dues checkoff, to attend the National Farmers Union Convention. It is requested that the participant make a report at the cooperative's annual meeting.

5. We urge the greater use of county and district legislative and cooperative directors. Candidates for all officer positions, delegates and alternate delegates shall introduce themselves from the rostrum of the state convention before the election.

6. We urge that all members wear identification badges representative of SDFU while attending functions where Farmers Union is involved.

7. We urge our board of directors to schedule an annual Farmers Union state picnic during the State Fair.

8. We urge members to inform the state office of their email addresses.

9. We urge members and interested parties to utilize the SDFU and NFU websites and the websites of its affiliated organizations such as the SDFU Foundation and the SDFU Insurance Agency.

B. Education

1. The education of Farmers Union members is an ongoing project. We recommend that this educational program include seminars for our young adults and stress the importance of district education directors. Education directors must help to maintain the quality and philosophy of the Farmers Union organization. Major emphasis should also be placed on a comprehensive adult education program for Farmers Union families to include coordination with vocational agricultural instructors, cooperative leaders

1 and agriculturally oriented institutions of
2 higher learning.

3 2. We advocate youth classes in every
4 Farmers Union local and county
5 organization. We recognize the value of
6 young Farmers Union members participating
7 in and working with the entire Farmers Union
8 organization. The participation of all must be
9 a goal of the youth program.

10 3. We recommend that the Education
11 Department continue the awards for
12 completion of activities approved by the
13 Education Council and stated in the
14 handbook.

15 4. We recommend that one or more state
16 Senior Youth Camps be held each year. We
17 urge every county and district Farmers Union
18 to participate in a youth camp to acquaint
19 more young people with Farmers Union
20 work.

21 5. We recommend that a Youth Advisory
22 Council be elected at each state Senior Youth
23 Camp.

24 6. We recommend that the SDFU Education
25 Department coordinate incentive tours for
26 Farmers Union youth.

27 7. We support ag in the classroom and
28 encourage Farmers Union education leaders
29 to become involved in farm safety training
30 programs.

31 8. We support the creation of collegiate
32 Farmers Union groups. We also encourage
33 collegiate Farmers Union groups to urge the
34 universities that they attend to offer classes
35 and/or majors pertaining to cooperatives,
36 rural life, or farm management and marketing
37 as stated in state issues H subsection K.

38 9. We recommend that the SDFU Education
39 Department provide seminars for young
40 adults to explore various production and
41 value-added agriculture opportunities.

42 **C. Cooperatives**

43
44
45 1. Farmer- and patron-owned cooperatives
46 play an important role as a stabilizing force

47 in our economic life and in the promotion of
48 the democratic process through their
49 emphasis on the Rochdale Cooperative
50 Principles.

51 2. Every member of the Farmers Union is
52 strongly urged to buy every possible supply,
53 sell all products and buy all their insurance
54 products and other services from Farmers
55 Union affiliated businesses, organizations
56 and cooperatives (e.g. cable TV.).

57 3. Farmers Union local, county and district
58 organizations need to establish and maintain
59 strong communications, participation,
60 patronage, and membership with local
61 cooperatives' boards of directors, managers,
62 and employees; and local and district
63 Farmers Union Insurance personnel.

64 4. We should continue to take a prominent
65 position of leadership in bringing the
66 cooperative story to the public.

67 5. Farmers Union affiliated cooperatives and
68 other farmer-owned cooperatives are
69 encouraged to pay the full five [5%] per cent
70 educational funds to Farmers Union.

71 6. SDFU's contributions toward
72 strengthening the economic position of all of
73 agriculture are enhanced by the support of
74 farmer cooperatives through membership
75 checkoffs.

76 7. We urge CHS Inc. cooperatives to
77 aggressively seek ways to keep locally-
78 owned cooperatives open to serve the farmer
79 patron.

80 8. We encourage women, Native Americans
81 and other minorities to become members of,
82 and directors of, cooperatives.

83 **D. Legislation**

84
85
86 1. Effective legislative activity is an essential
87 part of the overall Farmers Union effort to
88 preserve and strengthen our family farm and
89 ranch system. We urge all Farmers Union
90 members to become active participants in
91 legislative activity at the national, state and
92 county levels.

2. Farmers Union organizations and members are strongly encouraged to take part in the Rural Lobbyist Program at the state level during legislative session.

3. The SDFU Rural Lobbyist is a valuable tool when fully utilized by rural lobbyists.

4. We support the continuation of the Farmers Union Washington, D.C., Fly-In lobbying efforts conducted on behalf of family farmers and ranchers. We ask that our national and state organizations continue to publish voting records of members of Congress and our state legislature.

5. All Farmers Union officers and members are encouraged to subscribe to and read NFU News.

E. Foundation

1. We encourage all members to support the endowment strengthening the foundation; a nonprofit organization raising funds for educating young minds, building new leadership and creating new opportunities for economic growth in rural S.D.

2. We endorse the various approved scholarship programs within the Farmers Union for college education and vocational training.

F. Long-Range Farm Policy – The Parity of Income Plan

1. When the concept of parity was first introduced in agricultural law in 1936, the goal of national farm policy was to provide farm families a net income that was on par with the net income of non-farm families to ensure that producers had the same purchasing power as their urban neighbors. The 1910-14 base was selected as the appropriate economic period to achieve the goal of income parity.

2. The failure of farm programs to provide a parity of income for family farmers is a violation of the social contract between

family farmers and consumers in which farmers are responsible for production of a dependable supply of food and fiber in return for a parity of income with the rest of our society.

3. To return to the principle of parity of income, federal farm policies must provide agricultural incentive payments to family farmers to make up the difference between commodity prices in the marketplace and full parity for all agricultural commodities. These payments should be made to all family farmers based on their units of production to raise the return on their labor and management to the national median family income. Such payments must be strictly limited to family farm operators through a maximum payment level that would provide full-time family farm operators a parity of net income.

4. The payments would be based on a per-unit rate for the commodities produced by the family farm to make up the difference, if any, between prices received and the parity price of each commodity. The volume of commodities for which each farm family would be eligible to receive payments would be computed by the difference between the cost of production [excluding labor and management returns] and parity. This fair margin of return would be divided into the national median family income level to determine the maximum number of units of production for which payments could be made.

5. Payments would be made in the order of the commodities which had the least difference between prices received and parity to those commodities which had the largest difference until the goal of income parity is reached through a maximum number of eligible units of production for that farm.

6. The goal of such payments is to provide a parity of income and encourage full-time production by the farm family. Unearned income [from interest, dividends, rent, etc.]

1 and off-farm income [from wages, etc.]
2 would reduce the maximum number of units
3 of production eligible for incentive payments
4 proportionately to the net income goal of the
5 incentive payment program.

6 7. The family farm incentive payment shall
7 be so designed to encourage diversified
8 production units to the size of economic
9 efficiency for the combination of
10 commodities produced together with
11 appropriate soil and water stewardship.

12 13 **XI.ACROYNMS AND TERMS** 14 **GLOSSARY**

15
16 **100/RON clean octane E30** - An octane
17 rating is a standard measure of the
18 performance of an engine fuel. Fuels with a
19 higher octane rating are used in high
20 performance gasoline engines that require
21 higher compression ratios.

22 **1987 Farm Credit Act** – The Agricultural
23 Credit Act of 1987

24 **ACE** – United States Army Corps of
25 Engineers

26 **ADC** – Animal Damage Control

27 **ADT** – Animal Disease Traceability

28 **AIB** – Animal Industry Board

29 **AMS** – Agricultural Marketing Service

30 **BSE** – Bovine spongiform encephalopathy

31 **Capper-Volstead Act** – The Cooperative
32 Marketing Association Act of 1922

33 **Cell Cultured Protein** – Food made by
34 extracting cells from an animal and growing
35 them in a bioreactor.

36 **CFTC** – Commodity Futures Trading
37 Commission

38 **CRP** – Conservation Reserve Program

39 **COLA** – Cost-of-Living Adjustment

40 **COOL** – Country-of-Origin Labeling

41 **DOI** – United States Department of the
42 Interior

43 **DOJ** – United States Department of Justice

44 **DRG** – Diagnostic Related Groups

45 **E30** – a motor fuel blend that contains 30
46 percent ethanol fuel

47 **E50** – a motor fuel blend that contains 50
48 percent ethanol fuel

49 **E85** – a motor fuel blend that consists 85
50 percent ethanol fuel

51 **EBC** – Equivalent bushel concept

52 **EEP** – Employee Education Program

53 **EQIP** – Environmental Quality Incentive
54 Program

55 **EPA** – Environmental Protection Agency

56 **EAJA** – Equal Access to Justice Act

57 **ESA** – Endangered Species Act of 1973

58 **ESL** – English as a Second Language

59 **Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015**

60 **FACS** – Family and Consumer Science

61 **FAO** – Food and Agriculture Organization of
62 the United Nations

63 **FCS** – Farm Credit System

64 **FDA** – Food and Drug Administration

65 **FDIC** – Federal Deposit Insurance
66 Corporation

67 **FERC** – Federal Energy Regulatory
68 Commission

69 **FFA** – National FFA Organization

70 **Fifth Amendment** – the Fifth Amendment of
71 the U.S. Constitution provides for: individual
72 protections from double jeopardy and self-
73 incrimination; and a right to due process and
74 just compensation.

75 **FMD** – Foot and mouth disease

76 **FOIA** – Freedom of Information Act

77 **Food for Peace Act** – The Food for Peace
78 Act of 1966

79 **FOR** – Farmer-Owned Grain Reserve

80 **FS** – United States Forest Service

81 **FSA** – Farm Service Agency

82 **FTC** – Federal Trade Commission

83 **FWS** – United States Fish and Wildlife
84 Service

85 **GFP** – South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks

86 **GIPSA** – Grain Inspection, Packers and
87 Stockyards Administration

88 **GMO** – Genetically modified organism

89 **GOED** – Governor's Office of Economic
90 Development

91 **Illinois Brick Case** – a United States
92 Supreme Court case, Illinois Brick Co. V.

1 Illinois, sets out the “Illinois Brick doctrine,”
2 that prohibited indirect purchasers of goods
3 or services from recovering antitrust damages
4 from antitrust violators
5 **IM 22** – Initiated Measure 22
6 **IMSET** – Inventory Management Soil
7 Enhancement Tool
8 **Ionophores** – a lipid soluble molecule that is
9 used as an antibiotic and/or growth
10 enhancing feed additive.
11 **IRS** – Internal Revenue Service
12 **Missouri Seed Availability and**
13 **Competition Act** – House Bill 317
14 introduced in the Missouri State Legislature.
15 It provides for farmers to register with the
16 State Department of Agriculture in order to
17 retain seed from harvest for next year’s
18 planting season.
19 **NFU** – National Farmers Union
20 **NRCS** – Natural Resources Conservation
21 Service
22 **OSHA** – Occupational Safety and Health
23 Administration
24 **PAC** – Political Action Committee
25 **Pick-Sloan Act** – The Pick-Sloan Flood
26 Control Act of 1944
27 **PMA** – Power Marketing Administration
28 **POA** – Power of Attorney
29 **PSA** - Public Service Ad
30 **Public Law 480** – The Food for Peace Act of
31 1966
32 **PUC** – South Dakota Public Utilities
33 Commission
34 **REA** – Rural Electrification Administration
35 **REDI** – Revolving Economic Development
36 and Initiative
37 **RMA** – Risk Management Agency
38 **Rural Electrification Act** – The Rural
39 Electrification Act of 1935
40 **SDBIC** – South Dakota Beef Industry
41 Council
42 **SDDA** – South Dakota Department of
43 Agriculture
44 **SDDOT** – South Dakota Department of
45 Transportation
46 **SDFU** – South Dakota Farmers Union

47 **SDPB** – South Dakota Public Broadcasting
48 **SDSU** – South Dakota State University
49 **SNAP** – Supplemental Nutrition Assistance
50 Program
51 **SSA** – Social Security Administration
52 **UN** – United Nations
53 **USD** – University of South Dakota
54 **USDA** – United States Department of
55 Agriculture
56 **USF** – Universal Service Fund
57 **USMEF** – U.S. Meat Export Federation
58 **USPS** – United States Postal Service
59 **VA** – United States Department of Veterans
60 Affairs
61 **Voting Rights Act** – The Voting Rights Act
62 of 1965
63 **WAPA** – Western Area Power
64 Administration
65 **WIC** – Woman, Infants and Children

67 **XII. SPECIAL ORDERS OF BUSINESS**

68 69 **Truth in Labeling and Promotion of Meat** 70 **Products**

71 South Dakota Farmers Union (SDFU)
72 thanks South Dakota Legislators from the
73 2019 session for passing Senate Bill 68
74 which supports Truth in Labeling of meat.
75 SDFU supports the use of the term beef,
76 pork, poultry, lamb, and seafood in a food
77 label to be exclusive for meat harvested
78 from live animals in the traditional manner.
79 SDFU supports the use of USDA and/or
80 State inspection stamps be used on meat.
81 Furthermore, SDFU recommends a clear,
82 identifiable, and entirely separate label for
83 all other alternative proteins. We believe all
84 products should be required to pass the same
85 strict standards of food inspection as meat
86 products that come from animals raised in
87 the traditional manner. SDFU recognizes
88 that alternative proteins are destined to be in
89 international trade deals, therefore should
90 require separate negotiations than meat, such
91 as beef, pork or poultry, as the process of
92 production, packaging, and inspection will

1 be different than that of real meat products.
2 The United States should be a leader for
3 other countries as to how to define how cell
4 cultured products will be inspected and keep
5 standards for trade acceptance for these
6 products separate from beef, pork, or
7 poultry. The U.S. Meat Export Federations
8 website (www.usmef.org) defines
9 themselves as the trade association
10 responsible for developing international
11 markets for the U.S. red meat industry. It is
12 funded by USDA; the beef, pork, lamb, corn
13 and soybean checkoff programs, as well as
14 its members representing nine industry
15 sectors: beef/veal producing & feeding, pork
16 producing & feeding, lamb producing &
17 feeding, packing & processing, purveying &
18 trading, oilseeds producing, feed-grains
19 producing, farm organizations and supply &
20 service organizations. SDFU does not
21 support that alternative proteins, plant-based
22 proteins, insects, or cell cultured proteins be
23 allowed to be included in the check-off acts
24 and orders. We request USDA to educate
25 and put to rest misinformation on increased
26 carbon created by livestock production.
27

28 **Restoring Competition with Fed Cattle** 29 **Spot Market - 50/14**

30 The fed cattle spot market is a crucial
31 market for the United States live cattle
32 industry. It is where a competitive price is
33 established for all fed cattle. The spot
34 market price on finished cattle provides
35 price discovery for all cattle in the supply
36 chain regardless of age, weight, or gender.
37 The discovered spot market price for
38 finished cattle is also included in cattle sold
39 through formula contracts and most all other
40 alternative marketing agreements.
41 The volume of fed cattle sold in the spot
42 market has shrunk over the past several
43 years, hitting a national low of less than
44 22% of fed cattle slaughtered in 2015. In
45 2019 the number of spot market cattle sold
46 has increased but only by a few percentage

47 points. The United States cattle industry has
48 recognized this shrinking spot market has
49 reduced competition, yet no voluntary or
50 other industry-led correction efforts have
51 made any meaningful improvements.
52 South Dakota Farmers Union supports
53 congressional legislation such as US Senate
54 Bill 3693 which supports restoring
55 competition within the Fed cattle spot
56 market by requiring beef packers to procure
57 at least 50% of their cattle needs in the
58 competitive spot market and to receive
59 delivery of those cattle within 14 days.
60

61 **Enforce Packers and Stockyards Act**

62 The Packers and Stockyards Act was
63 adopted in 1921 after a Federal Trade
64 Commission report had found price
65 manipulation, restriction of food flows, and
66 defrauding of consumers and producers of
67 food which caused lack of competition.
68 Similarly, many producers today have
69 suffered from devastating prices for their
70 product, many of which are below the cost
71 of production.
72 South Dakota Farmers Union asks our
73 congressional representatives to urge the
74 Department of Justice to enforce the Packers
75 and Stockyards Act to its entirety.
76

77 **Merging of SD Department of** 78 **Agriculture and the Department of** 79 **Environment and Natural Resources**

80 South Dakota's number one industry is
81 Agriculture and the state's farmers and
82 ranchers are the backbone of this industry.
83 South Dakota's farmers and ranchers need to
84 be made a priority of the state government
85 and be ensured adequate voice when it
86 comes to resources, policies, and support for
87 production agriculture.
88 The purpose of the Department of
89 Environment and Natural Resources is to
90 protect water and land, while the purpose of
91 the Department of Agriculture is to promote

1 and protect agriculture in South Dakota.
2 These two missions stand independent of
3 one another, while these two agencies serve
4 as a check and balance system for one
5 another. The merging of these two
6 departments will result in fewer seats at the
7 table for our farmers and ranchers.
8 South Dakota Farmers Union calls upon the
9 2021 South Dakota Legislature to reject any
10 plan to merge the South Dakota Department
11 of Agriculture with the South Dakota
12 Department of Environment and Natural
13 Resources or any other state agency to
14 ensure that agriculture, farmers, and
15 ranchers remain a priority.

17 **Next farm bill to include Inventory**
18 **Management Soil Enhancement Tool**
19 **(IMSET)**

20 SDFU recognizing since the Freedom to
21 Farm Bill was enacted on April 4th, 1996.
22 The American family farmer has lost Global
23 Market share of agricultural commodities
24 from 73% to today's level of 37% in the
25 year of 2020. Throughout this same period
26 of time more native grasslands and marginal
27 soils have been utilized to grow crops
28 jeopardizing soil health across the nation. As
29 farmers experienced this loss of market
30 share globally American farmers have
31 increased Americans stockpile of farm
32 commodities forcing even lower farm-gate
33 prices. Not to mention causing
34 environmental harm to soil, air and water
35 quality. No other industry would see this as
36 acceptable to survive let alone to grow into
37 the future.

38 SDFU therefore, encourages the U.S
39 Congress, agriculture advocacy groups and
40 check off organizations to support SDFU's
41 Inventory Management Soil Enhancement
42 Tool (IMSET) concept for inclusion in the
43 next farm bill.

44 **Further definition of IMSET**

45 IMSET is designed as a management tool
46 for farmers to receive a price on his/her

47 grain commodities of beneficial financial
48 results for improving soil health needs of
49 his/her farmland.
50 Similar to and alongside their annual
51 renewal of revenue crop insurance farmers
52 can voluntarily decide to use IMSET and
53 renew on an annual basis. (Example) For
54 every 1.5% of crop acres they wish to
55 improve soil health they will receive 1.5%
56 increase of the guarantee revenue price
57 coverage for that crop.
58 Sign up would be as follows; When signing
59 up for crop insurance each farmer
60 voluntarily chooses to sign up to be eligible
61 for IMSET. Similar to choosing revenue
62 crop insurance level for the upcoming crop,
63 sign up for IMSET must be prior to deadline
64 date for crop insurance.
65 Reporting IMSET acres deadline will be
66 simultaneous to crop insurance and FSA
67 planted acres reporting. IMSET acres
68 reported determines crop revenue price
69 guarantee of each crop they are participating
70 in. The level of acres allowed in IMSET will
71 be determined by the level of farmer
72 participation. The more participation the
73 lower the percentage level with a cap of no
74 more than 10% per crop per year per farmer.
75 NRCS will certify cover crops best suited to
76 improve soil health of IMSET acres. NRCS
77 also determines what best practices to use to
78 improve soil health. Including but not
79 limited to haying or grazing of IMSET
80 acres.

82 **Distribution of Pandemic Federal Aid**

83 South Dakota Farmers Union (SDFU)
84 strongly supports more oversight in the
85 distribution of federal aid monies due to
86 pandemics. During the COVID-19 pandemic
87 federal disaster aid was distributed to
88 unentitled people and entities, both domestic
89 and foreign. SDFU supports, that under no
90 circumstances, should any federal aid be
91 allowed to be paid to foreign peoples or
92 entities. Furthermore, the improved

oversight needs to ensure that the funds are distributed to qualified and true farmers, ranchers, and agricultural producers.

developing re-opening plans that keep the health and safety of students and staff at the forefront.

Support of Beef Checkoff referendum petition

The Beef Checkoff is a government program that has been in existence for 35 years and most producers have not had an opportunity to vote on the program. South Dakota Farmers Union supports the checkoff referendum petition that would provide producers, who fund the Beef Checkoff program, a right to vote on the Beef Checkoff.

South Dakota Farmers Union urges that the program should either:

- a. Become voluntary, or
- b. sunset unless affirmed by a producer vote every five years to ensure that the producers who fund the program feel satisfied and well represented.

Support of experts in keeping SD Communities safe

South Dakota Farmers Union supports our health care experts, CDC and SD Department of Health in their recommendations to keep South Dakota communities safe.

Schools across the country and state are facing complex re-opening plans as it relates to the COVID19 Pandemic. South Dakota Farmers Union supports local control as it related to opening plans for South Dakota School, which include virtual and hybrid learning environments. We believe that no schools should lose funding for making the decision to not open schools, close during an uptick in cases, or move to virtual learning.

We support decisions of parents guardians, teachers, and staff to learn and teach in a virtual environments without penalty.

South Dakota Farmers Union commends the efforts of South Dakota school districts in



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