

# Utah Farmers Union Policy 2026

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## **FORWARD**

The family farm is the cornerstone of our Utah Farmers Union (UFU) state policy as well as the basis for a strong American society. The UFU ([www.utahfarmersunion.com](http://www.utahfarmersunion.com)) is formed to strengthen the family farm through dissemination of information important to the viability of production agriculture and the consumers we serve. To carry out the basic objectives of this association of Utah farmers and ranchers and to secure value for production, we work to:

- 1) Improve the methods of safe and ethical production and distribution of farm products from agricultural producers both large and small.
- 2) Provide family farms with the opportunity to earn a profit through individual effort and the use of sound management practices.
- 3) To achieve positive public recognition and economic security for families in production agriculture.

Note: Add Definition Section at the end of this document

## **INTRODUCTION**

America's family farms represent more than an agricultural system—they are the foundation of our nation's food security, rural communities, and democratic values. The Utah Farmers Union stands firmly committed to preserving and strengthening this essential institution through the collective power of our membership and strategic cooperation with consumers and fellow farm organizations.

As consumers increasingly seek to understand where and how their food and fiber is produced, we recognize both an opportunity and a responsibility. Through education, legislation, and cooperation, we bridge the gap between farm and table, ensuring that family farmers receive fair compensation for their critical role in feeding and clothing our nation and the world. The family farm system has proven itself the most efficient and resilient model of agricultural production in history, yet efficiency alone does not guarantee survival. Our nation's family farmers deserve the legal authority to regulate production and promote consumption in ways that ensure a fair return on their investment and labor—preserving the very foundation upon which American democracy was built and continues to stand.

Achieving these objectives requires a strong and growing organization. We encourage all members and officers to actively promote membership growth and educate others about the benefits of Farmers Union membership. Our directors should lead annual membership drives to increase our effectiveness at both state and national levels. We also encourage members to support our mission by utilizing National Farmers Union Insurance Companies for their insurance needs, strengthening the financial foundation that enables our advocacy work.

The policies that follow reflect our commitment to this mission and our vision for an agricultural future that honors the past while embracing the opportunities ahead.

**Secretary Vilsak's support of agriculture:**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KjYVTLOJCxo>

The Utah Farmers Union believes the family farm system of agriculture is the most efficient producer of food and fiber this nation and the world has ever known. This system has produced for the needs of our nation in addition to contributing large amounts of food and fiber to feed and clothe the world. In performing this essential service for mankind, producing farmers should be provided an adequate return on investment.

Throughout this great nation's history, family owned and operated agriculture has provided firm ground upon which our democracy's foundations are built. This ground must remain intact and firm for America to remain strong and continue to grow.

The number of persons making a full-time living on farm and ranch operations, approximately 1 percent of the population in the United States, has been declining drastically for the past several generations. We recognize that many factors have contributed to the decline of those making a living in America's most necessary industry. Some of the reasons for the decline of American family farms include

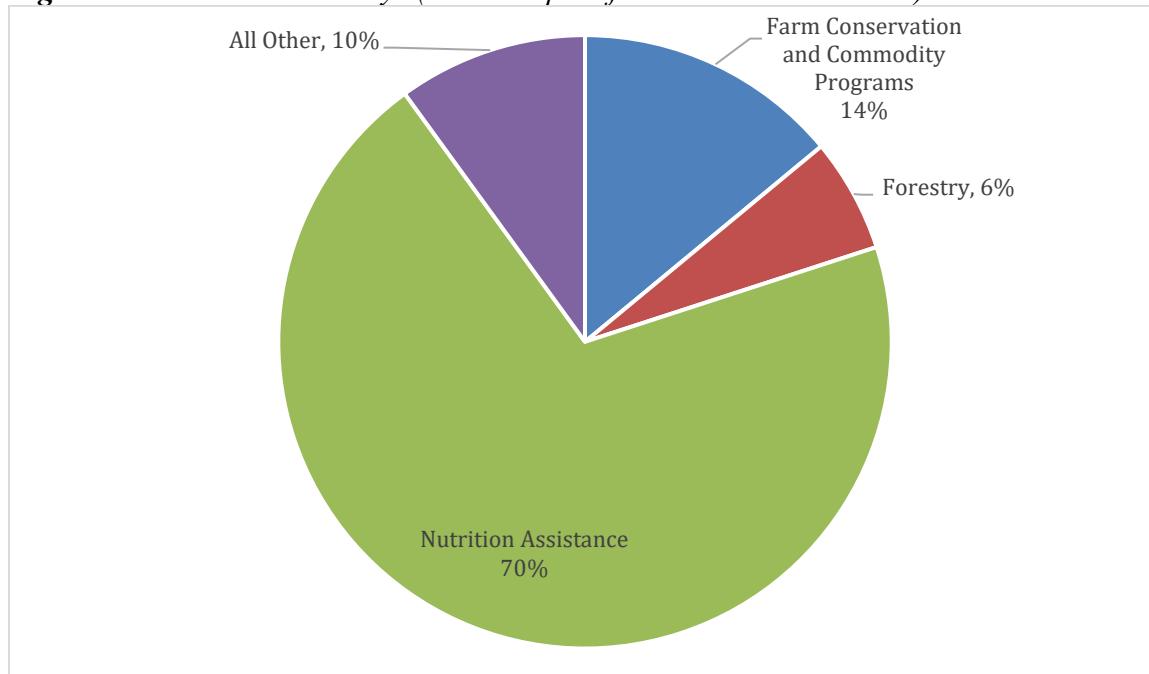
1. Lack of profitability or return on investment
2. High, and ever-increasing input costs such as fuel, fertilizer, seed, equipment, feed, and labor
3. Market manipulation – Corporate consolidation
4. Restrictive Government Regulations
5. Urban Growth and Lack of Land Use Planning
6. Competing Water Demand for Urban Development
7. Large and corporate investors that own farmland

**Utah Farmers Union is Committed to Help Our Consumers Understand That:**

1. Consumers spend approximately 11.2% (USDA ERS 2023) of their disposable income on food, the lowest of any nation. Only a small portion of what the consumer spends on food actually reaches the farmer.
2. The family farmer is a major consumer of goods. Farm production is an annually renewable resource that stimulates the entire economy. When family farm income approaches par with the non-farm sector, production agriculture creates millions of jobs.
3. Family farm agriculture is a major producer of new wealth and economic growth derived from farm products.
4. International farm trade is critical to the U.S. balance of trade since farm exports have a major positive impact on our growing trade imbalance.
5. The average age of the family farmer (63 years) continues to increase, while entry into farming by young families as their chosen profession is declining due to high capital investment and low rates of return on investment.



**Figure 1. 2025 USDA Outlays (Amount spent from each USDA dollar)**



Source: USDA Budget Summary

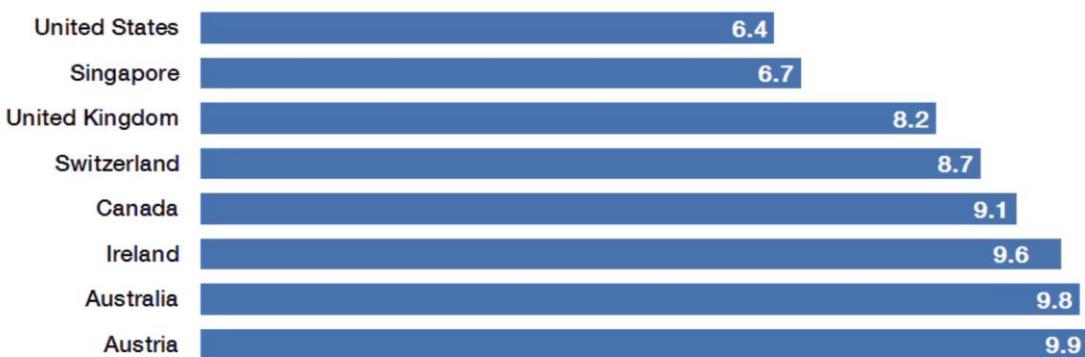
*Percent of consumer expenditures spent on food that were consumed at home, by selected countries, 2024*

**Figure 2. Countries That Spend the Least On Food, Selected Countries 2015**

## These countries spend the least on food



Percent of consumer expenditure spent on food that was consumed at home, by selected countries, 2015



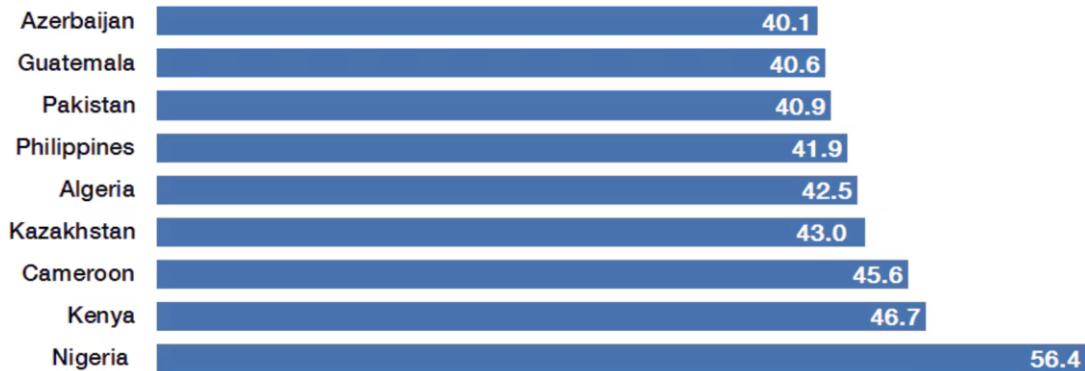
Source: ERS, USDA calculations based on data from Euromonitor International

**Countries that spend the most**

**Figure 3. Countries Who Spend the Most On Food, Selected Countries 2015**

## These countries spend the most on food

Percent of consumer expenditure spent on food that was consumed at home, by selected countries, 2015



Source: ERS, USDA calculations based on data from Euromonitor International

Image: World Economic Forum

Figure 4. The Farmers Share of the Food Dollar



## INDUSTRY LEADERSHIP

The Utah Farmers Union advocates for unified agricultural leadership on legislative and economic issues affecting farmers and ranchers. While each farm organization maintains its unique identity and strengths, we share a common purpose: advancing the interests of family farmers and ranchers. This shared mission demands coordinated action.

Major general farm organizations must collaborate on critical issues to address the economic challenges facing today's producers. By presenting a unified, nationwide agricultural voice, we can strengthen bargaining and marketing associations and enable agriculture to compete effectively with other economic sectors in securing fair commodity prices. Unity amplifies our influence without requiring any organization to sacrifice its independence or distinctive contributions to the agricultural community.

The challenges before us require more than cooperation—they demand leadership. Agricultural industry leaders must move beyond dialogue to formulate and implement a positive, actionable plan that delivers results for family farmers and ranchers across this nation.

## CURRENT CONCERNS & ISSUES

### **Animal and Plant Patents**

The Utah Farmers Union is opposed to laws allowing payments of patent royalties for existing plant and animal gene pools. Farmers and ranchers have, through generations of good management, developed gene pools of quality plants and animals. While continuing private research into plant and animal improvements, if new genetic breakthroughs are discovered, we believe the higher cost should be at the time of purchase of the patent and not in the following generations. We believe the results from research conducted using public funds should become public domain.

### **Biotechnology**

New technology is being developed through biotechnology to help return profitability to farmers, ranchers and a safe and abundant food supply to the consumer. We support the Utah State Legislature's continued funding and support of the Utah Agriculture Experiment Station. We further recommend that any genetically modified product be prevented from being marketed until FDA studies confirm the health and safety of the product and approve such a use.

### **Crop Insurance**

We support the continuation of federal crop and range insurance programs to help farmers and ranchers manage financial and production risk and recommend it be available for all crops, pastures, and rangeland to all producers.

The federal crop insurance law providing for expanded coverage throughout the nation needs to be fully understood by producers. Yield guarantee levels are based on producers' actual proven yields. We encourage farmers to report annual production yields.

## **Domestic Food Products**

We support the exclusive use of domestic grown food for our service men and women as well as other government agencies and programs, whenever and wherever possible.

## **Energy**

Utah Farmers Union recognizes the importance of domestic energy production and promotes the increased use of renewable and sustainable energy resources.

We favor federal policies that assure farmers and ranchers full energy needs for agricultural production at fair and reasonable prices.

## **Environment**

Farmers and ranchers are committed stewards of the land, deriving their livelihoods directly from the sustainable use of natural resources. This intimate connection to the earth makes agriculture inherently invested in environmental protection and long-term resource conservation.

Prior to enacting any environmental or pollution control measure, policymakers must conduct thorough cost-benefit analyses to ensure that standards are both scientifically sound and economically reasonable for producers and society. Federal environmental agency regulations must remain consistent with congressional intent and should not exceed their statutory authority.

We support individual state control of agricultural environmental standards. The diverse soils, climates, water resources, and topography across our nation make one-size-fits-all federal mandates inappropriate and often counterproductive. Environmental standards must account for geographical and regional differences to be effective and fair.

We strongly support continued funding of voluntary environmental incentive programs and commend those who make these resources available. Agriculture's contributions to environmental quality—including carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, water quality protection, and open space preservation—deserve recognition and appropriate compensation. Conservation is not solely a farmer's responsibility but a social benefit requiring shared investment. Society must recognize that the cost of conserving our natural resources is a public cost, not a burden to be borne exclusively by those who work the land.

## **Farm Service Agency-United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)**

The Utah Farmers Union believes it is necessary to have a long-term farm program with incentives for food producers to encourage their participation. Stable policies must be used to sustain America's family farms and ranches. See pages 3 and 4 (on USDA Outlays and Figure 1 on USDA budget). Currently, 14 percent (USDA) of funds from the farm bill support production agriculture, with the majority of funding going to social programs such as SNAP. We support education that will inform the public and help them understand the funding of social programs associated with the farm bill. Benefits from farm legislation and programs should be directed towards maintaining a financially healthy family agriculture and an associated prosperous rural community.

A prosperous rural community is one where residents have access to stable jobs, good healthcare, education, and a strong sense of community, all while maintaining a

healthy environment. It thrives economically, socially, and culturally, with local businesses flourishing and a high quality of life for all members.

#### **Benefits of a Prosperous Rural Community:**

1. **Economic Growth:** Strong local businesses and industries create jobs, leading to financial stability for families.
2. **Sustainability:** Focus on agriculture, renewable energy, and local resources promotes long-term sustainability.
3. **Better Quality of Life:** Access to essential services like healthcare, education, and recreation improves well-being.
4. **Community Connection:** Close-knit relationships among residents foster support and cooperation.
5. **Attracting Investment:** A thriving rural community can attract new businesses, investments, and government support.

In short, a prosperous rural community is balanced, thriving, and supportive of its residents' needs.

#### **Great Salt Lake**

Laws impacting water distribution should not favor industrial, residential and recreational uses over those needs of agriculture production. Given the current situation of the Great Salt Lake, we believe that water conservation should be made by all.

Production agriculture owns the rights to and uses a large portion of the total water in the State. Agriculture production has been using multiple water conservation practices for several years. Through the Water Smart Program, agriculture has provided leadership in water conservation throughout the state. Regulations need to be well thought out for the benefit of both farmers and municipalities to avoid unintended consequences.

## **FARM PROGRAMS AND AGRICULTURAL POLICY**

#### **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)**

Utah Farmers Union favors continuing the CRP program. FSA requires a maintenance operation to be done at least twice during the life of the contract. The four recommended methods are burning, mechanical clipping, light disking or managed grazing. The first three options can be detrimental to wildlife and their habitat. Therefore, we support the use of managed grazing as a preferred option for maintenance under the direction of FSA and NRCS for CRP contracts in Utah.

#### **Farm Bill: Stabilization and Income Security**

The Farm Bill's primary objective must be improving net farm income for working producers through a comprehensive production agriculture safety net that includes:

- **Price and income support** that responds to market volatility and covers production costs
- **Comprehensive crop insurance** with affordable premiums and meaningful coverage
- **Disaster assistance** providing rapid response to weather events, disease outbreaks, and market disruptions

- **Risk management tools** accessible to all operation sizes and commodity types
- **Working capital support** to bridge gaps between planting and harvest

This safety net must protect actual production agriculture—those who farm and ranch for their livelihood—not absentee investors or speculators. Congress must be educated on the urgent need to stabilize agricultural production and demonstrate the political will to revisit and revise farm policy when economic conditions warrant, rather than waiting for producers to fail.

### **Farm Loan Programs**

We urge FSA to continue to provide direct lending to Beginning Farmers and Ranchers. FSA should play a central role in providing loan funds to enable previous owners to exercise their rights of first refusal and help beginning and restarting farmers to buy land.

There needs to be a streamlining of the time and paperwork at the local county offices, with county loan officers providing timely filing and notification of loan status. We encourage the implementation of electronic correspondence. Farm lenders should provide beginning and underserved farmers access to low-interest monies. The Federal government should provide agricultural lenders with low-interest funds to help provide an incentive to producers in times of extreme economic hardship.

The Utah Farmers Union urges the Federal government to provide incentives to lenders to help agriculture succeed. We oppose any effort to extend farm credit system lending authority to foreign enterprises.

### **Local Administration and Program Flexibility**

Farm program administration should rest in the hands of locally-elected county farmers to the greatest extent possible. Local and state Farm Service Agency (FSA) committees must be granted flexibility in applying national programs to ensure relevance and effectiveness across diverse agricultural regions.

### **Right to Bear Arms**

We support and defend the right of each law-abiding citizen to keep and bear arms as guaranteed under the Constitution of the United States. We also support any educational programs, such as the Utah Hunters Safety Program and other programs that teach gun safety and the right to keep and bear arms responsibly.

### **Rural Health Care**

The Utah Farmers Union is concerned about the health care system in rural Utah. The ability to maintain and recruit rural healthcare providers is important. We support:

1. Financial recruitment of rural healthcare providers
2. Student loan repayments for healthcare providers locating in rural communities.
3. State sponsored grants for those contracting to locate in rural communities and/or other methods of strengthening rural health care services.

Medical insurance costs have become a major cost of farming and ranching families. With increasing premium costs, we believe these expenses should be 100% tax deductible for self-employed farmers and ranchers.

## **Rural Utilities Service**

Farmers Union has always supported the farm community in their endeavors for better living conditions and has supported electric, telephone and broadband cooperatives for the great service they perform for the people of rural America.

The Utah Farmers Union favors continuation of the existing Rural Utilities Service (RUS) programs. Relatively inaccessible areas should be electrified and received telephone and broadband communications service at a reasonable cost. The established right of rural electric cooperatives to serve patrons other than farmers and rancher must be fully protected from encroachment by private power companies.

Since 1906, Congress has repeatedly decreed by statute that non-profit cooperative and public bodies, many of which serve small communities and sparsely populated rural areas, be granted preference in the sale of federal power so that:

1. They will have a reliable source of power at affordable cost.
2. The benefits of federal power will flow directly to consumers
3. Federal power will constitute a competitive force in the retail energy market.

Federal courts as a lawful exercise of congressional power have repeatedly upheld this preference in the sale of federal power to public bodies and cooperatives.

We strongly support the preference principle of federal power marketing. Proposals to turn over public power resources to private utilities are counter-productive to the public good. We are opposed to turning hydroelectric generation systems that have been paid for by water and power users to the private utilities.

We support state efforts to keep and maintain reliable and affordable electrical power. Reliable base load electricity is essential to the production of agriculture and support of rural communities.

## **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)**

The Food Stamp Program is a way for qualifying Americans to receive a wholesome food diet. We urge continuation as enacted by Congress with proper distribution and supervision. See Figure 1 on USDA vs Production Agriculture and other USDA Programs on page 3.

## **School Lunch Program**

We support the School Lunch and Breakfast Programs and ask Congress to provide adequate funds and encourage all school districts to participate and use milk and “real” dairy products, including flavored, whole, and 2% milk. We also advocate real meat products and 100% U.S. produced products in the school lunch program.

## **Social Security**

The Utah Farmers Union supports the National Farmers Union in its efforts to protect social security for retired farmers and ranchers. We further propose the following:

1. We oppose diverting Social Security funds to other federal budget items.
2. That all contributions made into Social Security Trust Fund be invested at prevailing interest rates.
3. That every contributor to Social Security has an individual accounting of contributions with interest during productive years.
4. That benefits be indexed directly to contributions made with interest earned and that minimum benefits not be withheld.

5. That Social Security is used for the purpose it was intended.
6. We recommend that all employed persons in any segment of our economy pay into the Social Security Program.

We support the use of individual retirement accounts and believe the KEOGH and IRA plans should not be subjected to an income tax. The rate of withdrawal should be at the option of the individual concerned.

### **Soil & Water Conservation**

We support farmers rights to maintain their current agricultural water consumption pertaining to owned irrigation water shares without local or government over-reach

We support State and Federal soil and water conservation programs designed to promote watershed health and protect our soil and water resources from erosion, contamination and encroachment from development and municipalities. We support expanded efforts such as the Grazing Improvement Program, Water Optimization Grant, Utah Partners for Conservation Development. and those of local conservation districts, which has created incentives to ranchers and farmers, to promote conservation practices. We favor low interest loan programs be made available at the state level which could be used for conservation programs.

We encourage Congress to maintain its commitment to conservation by funding the Natural Resource Conservation Service at adequate levels. We support the Conservation Reserve Program and Conservation Stewardship Program and recommend increased funding for Agriculture Environmental Programs.

### **Trade Agreements**

As our national leaders pursue more Free Trade Agreements, Utah Farmers Union insists that no agreement be considered that will have negative financial implications to any segment of production agriculture. We recommend a responsible monitoring program be in place to avoid adverse effects on family farms.

We support fair trade as long as all trading partners play by the same rules - including labor, environmental, health, safety and currency standards.

- **Exports:** Because of the expanding imbalance of trade deficits, major policy considerations must be explored to regain and expand our agricultural exports. We encourage the federal government to ship U.S. produced agricultural commodities to developing nations rather than dollars. This will provide support to countries and individuals in need, while enabling family farms to remain profitable. We support measures to initiate a fair-trade policy with our trading partners to improve farm income rather than depress it.
- **Imports:** Fair trade agreements should level the playing field with America's trading partners. America's family farmers and ranchers should not have to compete with cheap, lower quality imports from countries that pay little or no attention to environmental and labor standards, and who manipulate currency to benefit trading arrangements.
- **World Trade Organization:** The Utah Farmers Union supports the efforts of National Farmers Union to be involved in WTO negotiations. However, Utah Farmers Union opposes actions by the WTO that erodes the right of our nation to

- negotiate our position to establish domestic farm policies or impose fees, taxes or fines.
- **Trade Deficit Imbalance:** The Utah Farmers Union requests that the President of the United States use his executive authority and provide leadership in policy direction to bring about a more equitable balance of trade for the U.S.

Trade should be conducted on fair market value. The balance of trade deficit should be considered with the federal deficit as a top national priority. The use of agricultural commodities in international trade would be a major item in bringing into balance the trade deficit. However, commodity prices should not be sacrificed for the sake of export volume. The Utah Farmers Union believes stimulating farm sales and income from this renewable resource will provide new jobs and help balance trade.

### **USDA Support Programs**

The Utah Farmers Union calls on the USDA to provide timely and adequate assistance for family farm operations, including loan guarantees, adequate funding, flexible repayment authority, and emergency programs necessary to respond to current economic conditions and keep working farmers on the land.

### **Utilities (Public & Private)**

We support research into all other sources of renewable energy as long as it does not interfere with public land grazing, historical sites, and areas of ecological significance. Utility companies are encouraged to develop and use “Green” power at equitable rates, including bioenergy produced from agricultural waste. State and Federal governments should provide an environment for encouraging alternative energy to the same degree as existing energy producing companies have participated in. This is including but not limited to, loans, loan guarantees, grants, carbon credits, investment credits and depletion allowance.

We believe that every effort should be made to keep the agriculture utility rates as low as possible. Utility costs, as a part of the cost of production, are jeopardizing the economic survival of food producers because rate increases are impossible for farmers to pass on to the consumer. Profit margins for agriculture are lower than other industries.

We support the concept of elected members of the Public Service Commission elected from representative districts to better reflect the needs of the people. A commission member is needed to represent agriculture.

We are opposed to a foreign corporation owning and controlling our public utilities.

We support the extension of broadband service to underserved rural communities.

## **STATE & NATIONAL ISSUSES**

### **Animal Husbandry**

Responsible livestock producers maintain sound animal husbandry practices that ensure the health, welfare, and safety of their animals through adequate nutrition, appropriate shelter, and humane handling. These practices are fundamental to producing safe, high-quality food while upholding the ethical standards that define professional agriculture.

The Utah Farmers Union opposes efforts to mandate unreasonable or scientifically unsupported livestock production management practices that fail to account for regional differences, operational diversity, or producer expertise. We further oppose restrictive county-level regulations that exceed state and federal standards for legally permitted Animal Feeding Operations (AFO) and Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO). Regulatory consistency and deference to established permitting processes are essential to operational stability and interstate commerce.

We support the responsible use of animals in public and private research institutions as a vital method of advancing human and animal health, provided such research adheres to established ethical guidelines and oversight protocols.

## **Education**

We favor federal assistance to education with a minimum of federal control. Authority should be assumed by state and local school districts.

We are opposed to further cuts in the Career and Technical Education budgets including High School Agriculture programs especially cuts that will reduce the effectiveness of the Agricultural Extension Service and Agricultural Research budgets. These programs are vital to ensure that agriculture remain productive and profitable.

We believe that we should provide our children with a good education. It is not realistic to provide major increases from raising property taxes and sales taxes on production items and equipment, which places an unfair burden on agriculture. We support using income tax to fund education and adjusting the family deduction for higher incomes, allowing larger families to contribute more. We are concerned that the present system for federally funded student aid programs discriminated against farm families because of farm assets. We believe student aid should look at net income to be fair.

We support the Ag in the Classroom program and advocate all subjects presented be valid examples of production agriculture.

We endorse the adoption of English as the official language of the State of Utah and the United States of America. All public services, including primary education, should be conducted in English.

## **Endangered Species**

Utah Farmers Union supports protection of endangered species. But in all cases the federal government should first allow local working groups and state plans to work before federal restrictions are levied. Any recovery plan should not restrict or curtail resource use and the local economies that depend on the land to support their livelihoods. Federal actions over the past 30-years under ESA have not shown much progress. The federal government should recognize locally developed management plans.

Environmental groups who protest ESA actions should not be allowed to collect any revenue from the federal government by using the Equal Access to Justice statutes unless they can prove harm to species by actions implemented by federal agencies. The designation of critical habitat "provides little real conservation benefit, and is driven by litigation rather than biology, it forces designations to be made before complete scientific information is available and imposes huge social and economic costs on the government and on occasion private property owners.

Critical habitat should not be designated unless endangered species are present in the area on either private or public lands. Private property owners should be compensated for the loss of the habitat they provide for endangered species recovery. No

species should be designated unless clear proof of need is demonstrated and a plan for restoration is present. Listing should be dropped and state control of the species should be enacted as soon the rehabilitation criteria are met

Predator control must be considered when implementing programs for threatened or endangered species populations.

### **Extension & Research**

Utah Farmers Union supports continued funding of the Extension program. The objective of future extension and research must be to provide programs that improve the net income of producers while continuing to be a resource for the general public.

Research and Extension must concentrate on new technology, marketing, production of better-quality commodities while maintaining and improving the environment.

### **Farmland Assessment Act**

We support the Farmland Assessment Act for the valuation of farmland for agricultural production and not for speculative purposes as presently in Utah law. We favor forgiveness of the rollback tax when farmland is taken through eminent domain. We oppose any changes to the greenbelt tax.

### **Fencing**

The county legislative body of any county is authorized through State ordinance to declare and enforce a general policy within the county for the fencing of farms, subdivisions, or other private property, to allow domestic animals to graze without trespassing on farms, subdivisions, or other private property. If such an ordinance is adopted, the county legislative body shall through ordinance declare and specify what constitutes a lawful fence. Such fence must be adequate for reasonable containment of livestock. In all cases, responsible livestock owners should be committed to managing their livestock. State regulations regarding strays and trespassing animals should be complied with.

### **Governor's Utah Agricultural Advisory Board**

We support the Utah Agriculture Advisory Board in its efforts to seek unity of action among agricultural interests in seeking better economic conditions and legislation conducive to the improvement of agriculture in Utah. Efforts should be made to include all agricultural organizations.

### **Immigration**

Farmers need a guest worker program that is legal, simple, fair, and preserves the dignity of the worker.

Immigrant labor has historically been a part of agriculture. This need is even greater today. The current political impasse creates a hardship for our farmers as well as immigrant employees.

We are in support of securing our national borders and recognize the need for legislation on both sides of the issue (enforcement and guest worker program).

Economic growth, continued urbanization, demographic and cultural changes, and other factors have limited the traditional pool of labor for agriculture in America. At the same time, a broken immigration system and excessive red tape make it difficult to obtain legal immigrant workers.

The only way to address the immigration issues is to implement real, comprehensive national immigration reform that provides a way for farmers and other employers to find the legal workers they need.

**We demand that the Federal government pass legislation on comprehensive immigration reform.**

### **Insect Control**

Concerning recent infestations of insects into the State of Utah and considering a majority of the insects hatch on and migrate from federally owned lands, the Utah Farmers Union believes it is imperative that the state and federal government coordinate efforts. In order for grasshopper control to be successful, we support continued commitment to the Rangeland Grasshopper Control Program utilizing a 50% cost sharing formula on private and state lands while the federal government maintains responsibility for the public lands it manages. Utah Farmers Union supports commitment to grasshopper, Mormon crickets, black grass bug and other damaging species control.

Insect infestations should be treated as a natural disaster similar to floods, hurricanes, etc. and federal assistance should be available in the form of grants.

### **Land & Natural Resource Ownership**

Established agricultural enterprises must be protected from civil harassment and nuisance suits.

Utah Farmers Union recommends all county and city councils adopt local ordinances to allow landowners to file for Agricultural Protection Areas designated under the current state law. We support and encourage strengthening State statutes that protect responsible agricultural practices (Right to Farm).

We believe that the intrusion of non-farm, corporate enterprises into U.S. and Utah agriculture is not in the best interest of the rural communities, family farmers and consumers of our nation.

We must maintain viable family agriculture in rural America to produce sufficient food and fiber.

Families that own and control their land best protect the nation's resources. In addition, government programs should enhance the interest of family farmers who are the primary stewards of the land.

Land use planning is the responsibility of the local government and not the state or federal government.

The rights of those affected by land zoning decisions must be fully protected at all levels of the decision-making process. The destruction of farm units should be avoided where possible. Agricultural districts could be formed in rural areas to help provide farmers with greater input into matters affecting land use.

We favor laws allowing agricultural land to be taxed according to agriculture use and not on speculative value.

County land use planning commissions should have at least one farmer or rancher member to provide agricultural input.

We oppose any efforts to create conservation easements without the consent and education of the private property owner.

We feel the use of eminent domain has and is abused by private companies. We hold that the proper use of eminent domain should be used only by local, state and federal

government for those purposes outlined in the Constitution. Compensation made for eminent domain should not be taxable and should represent current market values.

We support annual adequate funding for UDAF Land Conservation Boards (LeRoy McCallister Fund)

## **Media**

We support the Constitution of the United States and its First Amendment guarantee of freedom of speech. However, the Utah Farmers Union demands responsible reporting and journalism based on fact, not sensationalism. Our food supply, the highest quality and most abundant in the world today, is too important to be victimized by irresponsibility.

We encourage Farmers Union members, and other agricultural organizations to use the media, including social media, and other resources to educate the public of the importance of agriculture.

## **Mediation**

We support the agricultural mediation program that has been set up through the Utah State Department of Agriculture and Food and urge its continuation. Mediation on matters concerning agriculture (private or public) should have at least one active producer as well as representation from concerned commodity groups.

## **Noxious Weeds**

The Utah Farmers Union supports state and county weed laws and the enforcement of such laws to help control a growing problem. We recommend that our members strive to maintain all farms free from noxious weeds and work with local and county weed committees to identify and resolve problems.

State, federal, railroad, utility rights of way, highway systems and other landowners must comply with the same laws as farmers and ranchers in weed control programs to help control the spread of noxious weeds.

We recommend that the owners of land in the CRP program control the weeds. The state and federal government should control and eliminate all noxious weeds on their lands. We also believe that money should be appropriated to Utah State University to further research the possibility of creating a biological rust that will eradicate dyers woad. Any areas that are declared wetlands should be kept noxious weed free. We also support efforts to eradicate tamarisk, Russian olive, phragmites, rush skeletonweed, Medusahead rye as well as and other invasive and noxious plants.

## **Organic Production**

Utah Farmers Union supports the production of certified organic crops and livestock on family farms.

The organic farm or ranch must be certified by an accredited state, national or international organization, with certification standards equal to or higher than national standards.

The State Department of Agriculture and Utah Farmers Union support strong legal action if fraud is discovered in the sale of crops and livestock products that are misrepresented as organic or natural.

We recommend that the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food provide a full-time employee to oversee organic production in the State.

## **Predator Control**

Since the 1931, Animal Damage Control Act mandated that the federal government shall protect the livestock industry from predatory loss, we recommend this historical intent be carried out through adequate funding and agency commitment. Stockmen are under severe stress because of predator loss and limitations on control measures.

We oppose the introduction of wolf and grizzly bear populations in the State. We favor the use of aerial gunning, trapping, and other control measures. We believe they must be continued on state, federal and with permission on private lands to control coyotes, and other predators. This will safeguard the livestock industry and ensure a plentiful supply of food and fiber for Americans.

We urge appropriate agencies to maintain adequate predator control measures. If adequate commitment to a workable Animal Damage Control (ADC) program is not available to stockmen, we recommend that a federally financed indemnity program be instituted to reimburse stockmen for losses at one hundred percent of full value.

## **Protection of Agricultural Infrastructure**

As urban growth generates increased stormwater runoff, cities and counties must accept responsibility for maintaining adequate drainage facilities to prevent damage to agricultural land and canal systems. We support legislation that protects farmers and private canal companies from significant liability and excessive costs when development encroaches on existing irrigation infrastructure.

Mandated improvements to agricultural water systems necessitated by urban development must not be funded by agricultural stakeholders. These costs represent a consequence of growth decisions and should be borne by the beneficiaries of development—not imposed on producers whose operations predate and are impacted by encroachment.

These policies benefit agricultural producers, other industries, and all citizens by ensuring responsible growth planning and infrastructure investment that supports Utah's future.

## **Public Lands**

We believe that public lands must remain open to fulfill the concept of multiple use. Many range operators are required to travel by motor vehicle to maintain a viable ranching operation. If access is limited, the multiple-use concept is adversely impacted. Administrative access and maintenance of range improvements shall be allowed on all grazing allotments by administrative use including WSA's (Wilderness Study Areas). We firmly believe that the dollar value of federal grazing permits be recognized equally by all federal agencies. We recognize the increased number of wild horses and burros on public lands are competing for limited grazing resources and encourage prudent management.

Utah Farmers Union recommends that Congress continues to support the Public Rangeland Improvement Act fee formula enacted in 1978, which reflects fair market value of the permit through indexes and equitably compensates the federal government for use of the public lands. We further believe that when the public lands grazing fees are discussed and evaluated, the total cost of grazing should be used, including; herding, lost

animal, transportation, salting, labor costs, and watering not just the cash fee collected by the government.

We believe Taylor Grazing funds, along with other state and federal range improvement funds, should be designated for on-site improvements to improve grazing areas for domestic livestock. Minimal expense should be used for administration of these funds.

We believe that any cost incurred because of a change of use of property should be the responsibility of the new owner.

We believe the state, federal and private landowners should work closely in improving rangelands as a vital renewable resource. We support the Utah Agricultural Resource Development Loan Program and further recommend a portion of the state mineral lease funds be appropriated specifically for this use.

Public lands being sold at auctions should allow priority to individuals receiving a majority of their income from farming. Privatization of some public lands is a viable alternative but should be handled at the state level with permittee guaranteed the first right of refusal to buy saleable land. Proceeds from these sales should remain at the state and local levels.

Utah Farmers Union believes that before consideration is given to blocking of public lands, protection and assurances must be given to the multiple-use concept and the right of public land users. A comprehensive plan coordinated with county land use management plans must be worked out with the input of local public land users to guarantee the rights of livestock operators are protected. We believe all lands not designated as wilderness by Congress should be managed under the multiple-use concept.

We are opposed to the designation of anymore wilderness in the State of Utah due to the detrimental impact it has on ranching, rural communities, and the overall economy.

We are opposed to the designation of more monuments in the State of Utah. Farmers Union supports the use of Congressional intervention of the use of the Antiquities Act by the President. Any change of land use on public lands should stand the scrutiny of NEPA (National Environmental Protection Act) analysis.

User fees should be applied to other users of the public lands including backpackers, recreationalists, wood harvesters, etc. We encourage State and Federal land managers to reseed burned lands, to prevent encroachment by noxious weeds, prevent flooding, and provide erosion control and to maintain viable grazing lands.

## **Riparian Areas**

Utah Farmers Union believes management of riparian areas on public lands must be consistent with the multiple-use concept. Congress has mandated that the public lands be managed for multiple-use, and we believe any consideration to change Congressional intent must first consider impacts on permittees, including: permit cancellation, stock limitation, fencing riparian areas, water development, and etc.

## **Severance Tax**

We support state severance taxes on non-renewable natural resources, including electricity, exported out of state. We also support a portion of those funds be used for renewable resource improvement and development programs to be administered by the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food.

## **Transportation**

*We oppose the requirement for a MCS90 federal filings for farm vehicles, the exemption for agriculture should be reinstated.*

The Utah Farmers Union encourages the State of Utah to accept the federal guidelines and recommends that all states follow these guidelines to provide a uniform national standard.

We are opposed to the law mandating commercial driver's licenses (CDL) for the use of operating farm trucks used for private agriculture purposes, but encourage all drivers to obtain a CDL.

Those trucks entering the United States from foreign countries should meet the same safety inspection requirements and regulations that are required in the United States.

## **Trespass**

The Utah Farmers Union believes the key to better landowners/sportsmen relations is a strong and enforceable trespass law. We support the law that land must be posted as accessible before it can be accessed. The Division of Wildlife must educate hunters and enforce private property rights.

We urge the protection of landowners' private property rights. We believe a small number of hunters do not respect an individual's right to post land for no hunting. Illegal entry and damage reflecting on all sportsmen.

Posting of private property is a burden to the owners. Farmers and ranchers should not be held liable for accidents to persons trespassing on private property, whether posted or not.

Restitution and punitive fines should be required for destruction of private property.

## **Water Policy and Urban Growth Interface**

**Community Education and Cooperation:** The Utah Farmers Union is committed to working cooperatively with urban and suburban communities to foster mutual understanding of water policy, agricultural water rights, and the challenges posed by urban growth. Through education and dialogue, we can help community leaders, planners, and residents understand:

- The priority and function of existing agricultural water rights and delivery systems
- The critical role of irrigation infrastructure in food production and water management
- The economic and environmental consequences of poorly planned development near agricultural operations
- The mutual benefits of coordinated planning that protects both urban development and agricultural viability

By engaging proactively with cities, counties, and planning commissions, we can develop solutions that accommodate growth while preserving the agricultural systems that contribute to water conservation, open space, food security, and the economic foundation of rural Utah.

## **Wildlife Damage**

Farmers and ranchers are good stewards of the land and livestock and have considerable knowledge about wildlife management, habitat, economics and the natural resources of our state and private lands.

We support indemnity programs that will compensate farmers and ranchers for economic losses caused by wildlife to crops, stored commodities, rangeland, and livestock

The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, charged with managing the wildlife population, must be more receptive to local input. In recent years, wildlife populations have increased, putting greater pressure on private property. Herd size needs to be based on winter range carrying capacity.

Rangeland should be included with farmland in depredation. We support the Utah Wildlife board, as it is now established with both farmers and ranchers on the board. We are opposed to any groups not directly involved in production agriculture serving on either committee.

## **Utah Department of Agriculture & Food (UDAF)**

We urge UDAF to implement legislation to promote the best interests of family agriculture in our state. We applaud the UDAF's efforts to support agriculture and their efforts to promote and facilitate marketing of "Utah's Own" farm commodities, locally, nationally and internationally. We support the continuation and enhancement of the Utah Market News Report.

## **Utah Department of Natural Resources (DNR)**

Utah Farmers Union supports the Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR) continued management of wildlife in Utah. Whereas DWR is the most active government agency in Utah purchasing private lands, Utah Farmers Union requests that the legislature conduct trend studies to determine if the purpose of the acquisition of these private lands have been fulfilled and to determine if these lands would be more viable being placed in private ownership with conservation easements in place.

We also believe that the DNR has the responsibility to control game animals or compensate stockmen and farmers for their losses.

## **Young Farmers & Ranchers Education**

Agriculture is the backbone of our society and this industry can only remain vital through the entry of more young farmers. We urge the State and National Farmers Union to support Young Farmer and Rancher Education programs through 4-H and FFA programs. We support a closer working relationship with 4-H clubs and FFA chapters to encourage agricultural education, scholarships and proficiency. The Utah Farmers Union strives to improve its youth education programs within the organization.

## **Water Policy**

Water plays a vital role in Utah's economy. We urge the State of Utah to establish a sound water policy that is beneficial for the needs of agriculture and the environment.

The Utah Farmers Union opposes any attempt by the federal government to claim un-appropriated water originating on the federal lands or any lands acquired in the future by the Federal Government.

The Great Salt Lake is in need of replenishment. ALL sectors of the economy must contribute to conservation measures to help replenish the lake.

We believe the water allocating methods in the State of Utah to control water should not be altered.

Existing water user rights must be protected. Future and current water systems must take into consideration the existing rights of water users.

We support the management and preservation of water levels within an aquifer to prevent depletion of a primary water resource.

When the federal government builds projects requiring water originating within the boundaries of the State of Utah, they should abide by the same laws as other water users.

We recognize that water must be used for beneficial purposes with priorities for the production of food and fiber. Utah Farmers Union supports State statutes that allow grazing permittees to hold stock watering rights on federal lands.

Farmers Union believes state law should allow an exemption for the loss of water rights for non-usage when land is placed in conservation programs such as the Conservation Reserve Program or other production management programs. Water rights must not be forfeited due to natural disaster or drought. We support the banking (see Definitions) of agricultural water.

We support the investigation of more water storage throughout the State as well as any application or action that would enhance water storage and delivery.

We recognize the need for water development in the State of Utah. State and Federal Agencies or private entities must compensate the landowner for agricultural land that will be taken out of production, including land destroyed through a higher water table. Just compensation should be provided to those forced to relocate, including purchase of the entire operation if it is no longer economically feasible to operate, including severance and relocation costs.

## **Wetlands**

Government actions to protect or enhance wetlands should not encroach upon private property rights.

We believe those private property owners and local Governments should have greater control in the wetland issues. Any disagreement on interpretation of law must be afforded all rights under law. Where any determination concerning wetlands conflicts with private property rights, such determination must be with just compensation to the property owner.

# **FINANCE**

## **Federal Reserve**

We believe that all Federal Reserve appointments be limited to one five-year term and urge that half of the appointees represent various segments of the economy, including one bonafide farmer, in addition to banking.

## **TAXATION ISSUES**

We support sales tax and income tax as the proper method of financing government. We oppose any increase in farm property taxes either through mill levies or increased valuation.

Additional tax burdens on agricultural property without consideration of income or profit derived from farm enterprises will jeopardize the ability of farm families to survive in an already depressed farm economy.

Any additional school funding should not come from a property tax.

We support the investment tax credit, income averaging, and capital gain provisions for agriculture and the ability to deduct state and federal taxes paid. We recommend that an exemption be provided to agriculture on the mandatory state and federal withholding tax. We support legislation that would extend the time period of income tax liability, and accelerated depreciation of breeding livestock and machinery.

### **Estate and Inheritance Taxes**

We urge the federal government and states to abolish the estate and inheritance taxes on family farms and small businesses where a direct family member continues the operation of that farm or business.

### **Sales Tax/VAT**

We are opposed to a national value added tax. We support a reasonable sales tax on foods. We support the collection of sales tax on retail items purchased through Internet sales and the partial remittance of revenues to the county or municipality where the purchase was made.

## **COOPERATIVES**

We urge all our members to wholeheartedly support Farmers Union affiliated and farmer-owned cooperatives in Utah. The cooperative is an extension of the farmers business and should be treated as such in the administration of farm programs. Therefore, the policy of the U.S. Department of Agriculture should be to give bonafide farmer-owned cooperatives the key role in assembling and handling farm commodities for foreign markets.

The farm cooperative is an effective method for producers to reduce their cost of production, maintain a reliable source of inputs, and efficiently market and process their products.

### **Expansion of Cooperatives**

The promotion and encouragement of farm cooperatives should be given top priority as an effective means of increasing farmers bargaining power.

Consistent with the long-established cooperative principles, voting rights should be rigidly restricted to one vote for each member. Farmers Union cooperatives, and others supported by our members, are urged to maintain their goals and operating policies consistent with the income improvement ideals of Farmers Union. We urge our members to get involved with local supply co-op and maintain input on local boards. We are opposed to any legislation, which would weaken the present cooperative laws as set forth

in the Capper-Volstead Act. To accomplish this goal, the voting right provision should be in compliance with Capper-Volstead.

Expansion and consolidation of farmer-owned supply, service and marketing cooperatives should be undertaken where such action allows co-ops to provide additional service for patrons. Legislation should be enacted allowing cooperatives to develop greater marketing power. We urge steps be taken to clarify statutory rights of co-ops in regards to contracts involving the purchasing and marketing of farm commodities.

We believe that cooperatives are an extension of a farmer's business and are a non-profit entity. We support efforts to amend this law to allow those funds to remain in the farmer's co-ops to work for its members.

### **Teamwork of Cooperatives & Farmers Union**

We urge the maximum use of cooperatives in handling reserves of farm commodities for the nation's domestic food, fiber and energy needs and in implementing the Food for Peace Program and in foreign trade. Farmer cooperatives have historically shown their efficiency and effectiveness in assembling and distributing agricultural production and supplies.

Mutual advantages and benefits accrue to Farmers Union membership and the cooperative when we maintain a strong educational program on behalf of co-ops and when co-ops in turn contribute educational funds to Farmers Union, as well as fostering membership through a dues check off. We commend those cooperatives doing so and urge our members to give their loyalty and patronage to those institutions.

We support the efforts of the Utah Council of Farm Cooperatives on behalf of cooperative members through annual dues participation.

## **COMMODITY GROUP ISSUES**

### **Alfalfa**

The Utah Farmers Union believes that the amount of hay produced in Utah and shipped out of state leaves farmers at risk for fraud from brokers. The State of Utah should require a bond on all hay brokers equal to the dollar volume of hay purchased yearly.

We support the state's efforts to develop and maintain an electronic hay market reporting and listing service and encourage buyers and sellers to support the service.

We support the use of Round-up Ready alfalfa. We believe that the State should have ongoing research with Utah State University (USU) to find alfalfa that is resistant to disease and pests.

The State should also check into the cereal leaf beetle problem and try to work out a solution with California to keep the market open. We believe that Utah Farmers Union, with help of USU Extension, should develop programs to educate farmers on the control of cereal leaf beetle.

### **Animal Cell Culture**

Utah Farmers Union opposes the use of animal cell culture products to be labeled and marketed as animal meat.

### **Beans**

We favor a loan program on all dry edible beans similar to the wheat loan

program with non-recourse loans.

### **Bee, Honey and Pollination**

Utah Farmers Union recognizes it is essential to support and accelerate research on Colony Collapse /disorder (CCD). Utah Farmers Union supports the implementation, management, and development of honey bee and pollinator bee colonies.

### **Beef**

We recommend that livestock entering our national borders on the hoof and meat purchased from foreign sources should be included as part of the meat import quotas allocated to foreign countries. We request that all foreign meat imported into the United States be required to meet the same quality, sanitary and production requirements, including drug residue, which apply to domestically produced meats.

We support the national, state and local beef councils and a reasonable increase in federal check-off program including imported on the hoof and boxed beef or the industry to obtain funds to use in their beef promotion activities. We believe this check-off should be mandatory for all cattlemen to pay their fair share. The beef council should continue to publish an annual financial report to assure producers that the money is being spent in the promotion and selling of 100 percent real beef.

Utah Farmers Union supports efforts to control imports of Mexican and Canadian cattle into the United States.

### **Chickens and Turkeys**

We support state and national marketing orders managed and controlled by Commodity groups whenever necessary to improve the economic position of that group.

We believe that a supply-management program should be initiated by vote of all producers and only with the full and positive support of USDA in administration of the program. Transfer of marketing allotments from one producer to another should be limited to the state or producer/handler area where the allotment originated. We oppose the transfer of allotments, which would replace or reduce the family-owned type of operation.

We support poultry being under the Packers and Stockyards Act.

We support the Utah State 4-H and FFA Turkey Show Program.

### **Country of Origin Labeling (COOL).**

Imported agricultural products should be required to have country of origin labeling.

### **Dairy**

Given the nutritive and health benefits of one of nature's most perfect foods, we encourage programs that help to maintain a strong and viable dairy industry. These programs should be designed to allow producers to earn their cost of production plus a reasonable profit from the marketplace. It should provide a high-quality stable supply of dairy products to consumers, while at the same time providing a safety net for family dairy farmers in times of low prices.

We support full funding of the school milk program with emphasis on quality and choice, including flavored milk. Efforts should be increased to ensure that the milk is

served cold. We support the use of re-sealable plastic containers in the school lunch program.

We contend that the only way to protect family dairy farmers' long term is an effective supply management program. We support full funding of dairy products in international assistance programs.

We support national mandatory price discovery of dairy product sales and inventory at manufacturing plants throughout the country and the use of this data in milk pricing. We encourage the Secretary of Agriculture to maintain and audit this information as to accuracy, and to provide severe penalties and compensation to producers if fraud is discovered.

We support efforts to distinguish between natural, imitation and substitute dairy products. We oppose any efforts that allow the use of dairy terms (i.e. milk, cream, cheese, cheddar, etc.) in labeling of imitation and substitute dairy products. We oppose the attempts of processors to change the identity standards of milk and cheese. The use of these terms is deceptive to consumers. We support the use of the "Real Seal" on all milk and dairy products.

We urge the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the FDA to require dairy product imports into the United States be produced and manufactured under the same quality standards as are required by domestic producers and that the cost of such inspections be born by the exporter or exporting country. All imported dairy products must be assessed an equitable amount for promotion.

We applaud the efforts of our national promotion boards to combine their efforts to avoid duplication and waste. We also ask that our promotion groups maintain their advertising of dairy products at high levels to increase commercial consumption and to help to maintain a stable market.

We support the national NMPF Exports and Trade (NEXT) program and encourage all producers to participate. We strongly support the Dairy Margin Coverage program.

## **Farmers Markets**

Utah Farmers Union supports local farmers markets. These markets provide an excellent opportunity for local growers to market the produce they raise to people in their communities. Utah Farmers Union supports Utah Department of Agriculture and Food's "Utah's Own" program and USU Extension's Small Farms program that help and educate local growers and artisans provide plentiful, safe and healthy produce and prepared foods to the public.

## **Fruits and Vegetables (Perishable)**

Adequate funding should be provided to USU to continue frost forecasting, climatologically, insect and disease research essential to agriculture.

We support and encourage an aggressive fruit processing co-op and marketing program in the state.

We support and encourage the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food in its efforts to control the Apple and Cherry Maggot and the Gypsy Moth. We believe foreign imports must meet domestic quality standards.

## **Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)**

We support GAP and other crop certification programs that ensure wholesome and safe products for the consumer. Producer education is needed to help producers become certified. We support USU Extension in its efforts to train producers and help them become certified. UFU supports cooperation with the National Farmers Union on funding and training for educational programs.

We support and encourage participation in UDAF's Agriculture Voluntary Incentive Program (AgVIP).

## **Green House Industry**

We believe Utah Farmers Union should help promote the Horticulture and Greenhouse Industry in Utah.

## **Meat Packer Concentration**

Increasing market control into the hands of fewer and fewer packing firms has traditionally been viewed as damaging to the interests of both producers and consumers. In recent years, meat packer concentration has flourished under lax enforcement of anti-trust laws. Today, the four largest packers control in excess of 80 percent of the slaughter market. Federal Antitrust laws, the Packers and Stockyards Act and state laws should be enforced and strengthened to break up the monopoly that is currently controlled by three multinational conglomerates.

All food products coming into the United States must be subject to the same USDA inspections and regulations as similar food products grown in the United States.

More market information should be reported by packers to assist in the live cattle price discovery process. The industry's price discovery system/procedures must be mandatory, verifiable and auditable with substantial penalties if fraud is discovered. Producers should work to have appropriate government agencies redefine captive supplies from 14 day to 7 day limits between obligating cattle and the date when shipment occurs, and to restrict the ability of packers to feed cattle.

## **Pork**

We recommend a strong support for family owned and operated pork operations in Utah. We believe in seeking cooperative solutions to marketing, processing and value added programs.

We oppose vertical integration and CAFOs being cited in Utah without complete evaluation as to the impact to any pre-existing family farming operation.

We support the health testing of all swine coming into Utah. We support the concept that all Junior Livestock Swine Shows be terminal.

## **Potatoes**

We support the National Potato Promotion and Research Act. Legislation should be enacted which forbids processors of potatoes from the production of such commodities. We object to the practice of processors producing and processing agricultural commodities to manipulate and monopolize a specific commodity.

## **Sheep and Wool**

We support continued efforts to permanently reenact the Wool Act into the Farm Bill, with incentive levels based on parity or cost of production. Funds collected for this

program are collected from tariffs on wool imports and are not a tax on the general public so these funds should go directly to the producer.

The Federal Government should continue to charge tariffs and enforce quotas on lamb imports in light of the fact modern transportation has forced domestic sheep producers to compete with wool producers receiving government support for their products.

Any government lamb purchased for institutional, military or any other use should be American produced lamb with purchases made during the high production season.

Lamb grading should be kept on an optional basis for either cutability or quality grading, but under no circumstances should the sheep industry be subjected to a combination of the two systems on the same carcass.

We support the promotional efforts of lamb and wool being done by the American Sheep Producers Council and the "Make it Yourself with Wool" contest.

We support the continued efforts of the American Sheep Industry to include lamb and mutton in efforts to require labeling and inspection of all red meats imported in the U.S. Legislation should require that 100 percent of all red meat imported in the U.S. must meet the same sanitary and production standards as required of American producers. Labeling requirements should include such information as country of origin and date of kill, including all U.S. produced lamb.

## **Wheat and Feed Grains**

The Utah Farmers Union believes a program should be established to manage our abundance through producer referendum. This would involve using actual yields with bases in units of production to improve farm income and to reduce government costs through higher market prices with targeted benefits.

To maintain a reasonable income for farmers, commodity target and loan rates should be set at 95% of the cost of production. Congress is responsible to ensure that the breadbasket for the United States is maintained for the benefit of all its citizens and generations to come.

We recommend that a producer may enroll up to 20 percent of normal crop base into soil restoring crop rotation program for up to three years. The Secretary of Agriculture shall make payments during enrollment based on fair rental value. We further support the \$125,000 deficiency payment limitation. Malting barley should be a separate item and considered in the pricing formula.

Utah Farmers Union supports a program that establishes a fair and level playing field for all agricultural products. We support the limitation of imports of grain coming into the U.S. It is imperative that Congress senses the urgency and needs of farmers and ranchers to begin immediately to address these needs through some realistic new legislation.

## **ANIMAL HEALTH**

### **Brucellosis**

The federal brucellosis program has implemented standards by which the State qualifies for a brucellosis free classification. It is essential that dairy and beef herds have clearance for movement across the state lines and for national and international markets. We believe a brucellosis free status is paramount for the State of Utah.

We favor mandatory brucellosis vaccination and testing programs for dairy, beef and domesticated wild animals. We support state law and department regulations providing a mandatory program and stronger import restrictions to minimize the chance of importing the disease from other states. We favor continuance of the federal indemnity program and adequate funding to carry on an effective eradication program.

We support limited number of certified technicians monitored by the state departments of agriculture to provide vaccination services to outlying herds. We feel this will not adversely impact veterinarians and would increase the level of compliance.

Because the State of Utah manages buffalo herds and buffalo can transmit this communicable disease, we urge the state to maintain these herds with a brucellosis free status.

State and federal inspectors may carry the disease, so we urge them to maintain the highest sanitary practices.

### **Large Animal Veterinary Education**

Given the shortage of large animal veterinarians in many rural parts of Utah and the Intermountain West, we support Utah State University's veterinary program. Utah Farmers Union requests USU continue supporting and funding the Agriculture Diagnostic Laboratory to support agricultural producers.

The Utah Farmers Union is dedicated to strengthening the family farm system as the foundation of Utah's agriculture and a cornerstone of America. Through education, legislation, and cooperation, we advocate for policies that ensure economic security, public recognition, and long-term viability for family farms.

Our vision is clear and unwavering: a future where family farms are profitable and sustainable, supported by fair market prices, responsible trade agreements, and protected access to water and land. A future where young families are drawn to agriculture through education, financial opportunity, and pathways to land ownership—reversing the troubling trend of aging producers without successors. A future where consumers understand and value the family farmer's role in producing safe, high-quality food and sustaining vibrant rural communities.

The family farm system has proven itself the most efficient and resilient model of agricultural production this nation and world has ever known. But efficiency without equity leads to consolidation. Productivity without profitability leads to exodus. Abundance without fair compensation leads to extinction.

### **Trichomoniasis**

We support mandatory Trichomoniasis testing for all bulls of breeding age. We also encourage continued research to improve testing accuracy.

## **CONCLUSION**

The policies articulated in this document represent more than positions—they are commitments. Commitments to the land, to the families who work it, to the communities that depend on it, and to the democratic principles built upon it. United in purpose and strengthened by cooperation, the Utah Farmers Union will continue the vital work of ensuring that family farms remain the beating heart of American agriculture for generations to come.

**We will not stand by and watch family agriculture fade from the American landscape.**

**The ground upon which our democracy stands must remain in the hands of those who tend it.**

# APPENDIXES

## Glossary of Terms

### Acronyms:

- **ADC:** Animal Damage Control
- **AFO:** Animal Feeding Operation
- **AMS:** Agricultural Marketing Service
- **APHIS:** Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
- **CAFO:** Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation
- **CDL:** Commercial Driver's License
- **CCC:** Commodity Credit Corporation
- **CCD:** Colony Collapse Disorder
- **COOL:** Country of Origin Labeling
- **DNR:** Department of Natural Resources
- **DWR:** Division of Wildlife Resources
- **EPA:** Environmental Protection Agency
- **ERS:** Economic Research Service
- **ESA:** Endangered Species Act
- **FDA:** Food and Drug Administration
- **FSA:** Farm Service Agency
- **GAP / GAPs:** Good Agricultural Practices
- **IRA:** Individual Retirement Account
- **NEPA:** National Environmental Policy Act
- **NEXT:** NMPF Exports and Trade
- **NMPF:** National Milk Producers Federation
- **NRCS:** Natural Resources Conservation Service
- **MCS-90** (written as “MCS90”) – Motor Carrier Act MCS-90 endorsement (federal filing/insurance endorsement)
- **RMA:** Risk Management Agency
- **RUS:** Rural Utilities Service
- **SNAP:** Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
- **UFU:** Utah Farmers Union
- **UDAF:** Utah Department of Agriculture and Food
- **USDA:** United States Department of Agriculture
- **USU:** Utah State University
- **VAT:** Value Added Tax
- **WSA** (appears as “WSA’s”) – Wilderness Study Area(s)
- **WTO:** World Trade Organization

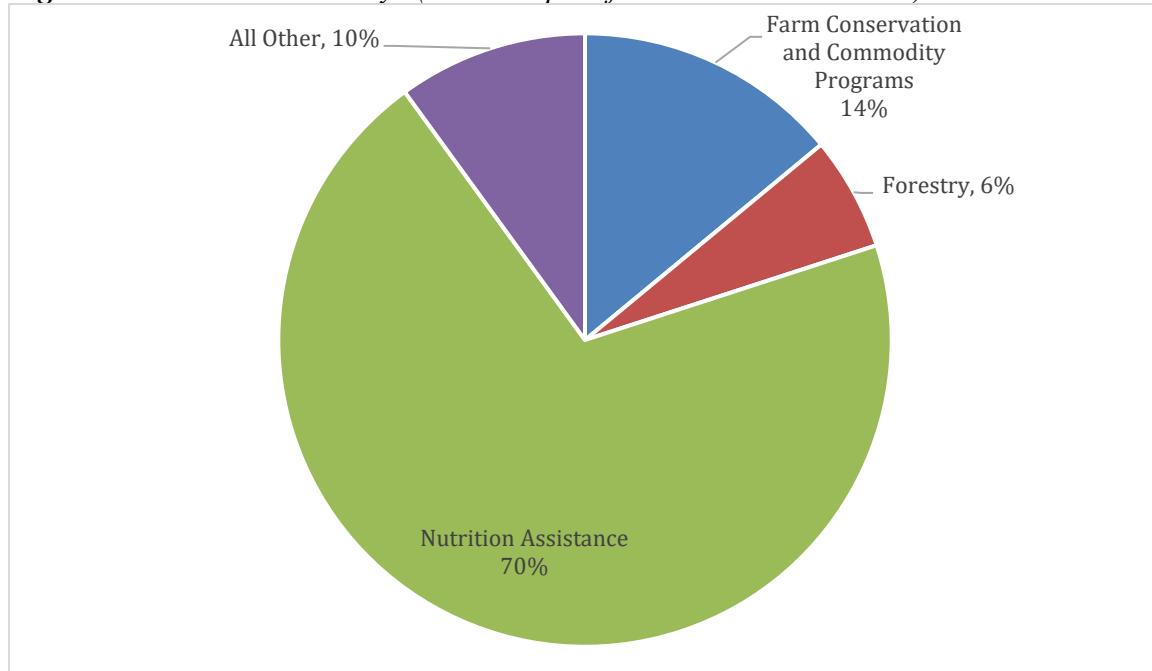
**Family Farms:** Family-owned and operated agricultural enterprises where management decisions and the majority of labor are provided by family members who have a direct ownership stake in the operation. These farms may employ additional workers but maintain family control over decision-making, risk, and profit. Family farms represent the foundation of American agriculture and encompass operations of various sizes, from small diversified farms to larger specialized operations, united by the principle of family stewardship and multi-generational commitment to the land.

**Domestic Food Products:** Agricultural commodities, food, and fiber produced within the United States by American farmers and ranchers. These products are grown, raised, or manufactured on U.S. soil under U.S. food safety regulations and labor standards, contributing to national food security, rural economic stability, and reduced dependence on foreign food sources.

**Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs):** Voluntary auditable standards and practices designed to minimize microbial food safety hazards, ensure worker safety, and promote environmental stewardship in agricultural production and handling. GAPs cover areas including water quality, soil amendments, worker health and hygiene, facility sanitation, and field management. These science-based practices help farmers produce safe, high-quality food while maintaining sustainable operations and meeting market requirements.

## Figures

*Figure 1. 2024 USDA Outlays (Amount spent from each USDA dollar)*



Source: USDA Budget Summary

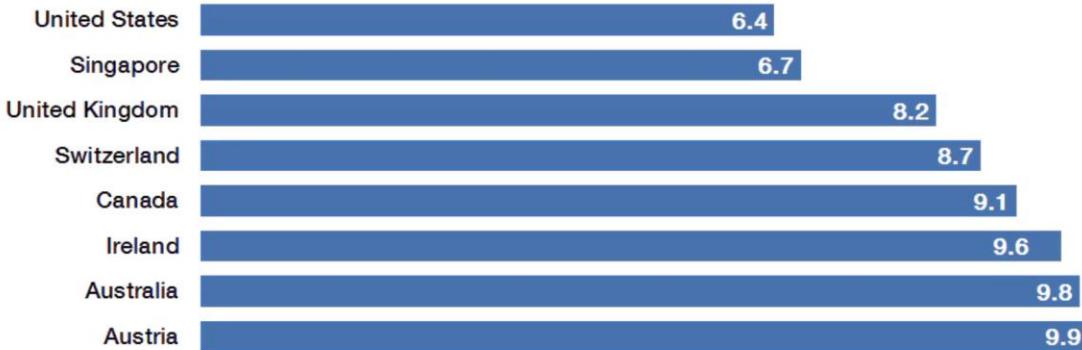
*Percent of consumer expenditures spent on food that were consumed at home, by selected countries, 2024*

**Figure 2. Countries Who Spend the Least On Food, Selected Countries 2015**

## These countries spend the least on food



Percent of consumer expenditure spent on food that was consumed at home, by selected countries, 2015



Source: ERS, USDA calculations based on data from Euromonitor International

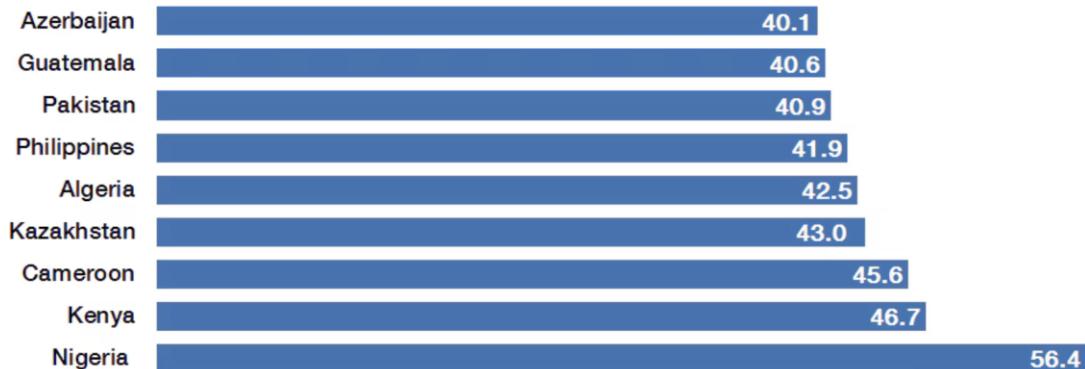
### Countries that spend the most

**Figure 3. Countries Who Spend the Most On Food, Selected Countries 2015**

## These countries spend the most on food



Percent of consumer expenditure spent on food that was consumed at home, by selected countries, 2015



Source: ERS, USDA calculations based on data from Euromonitor International

Image: World Economic Forum

Figure 4. The Farmers Share of the Food Dollar



National Farmers Union

Visit [nfu.org](http://nfu.org) to learn more

UNITED TO GROW FAMILY AGRICULTURE

# The Farmer's Share

Did you know that farmers and ranchers receive only 15.9\* cents of every food dollar that consumers spend? According to the USDA, off farm costs including marketing, processing, wholesaling, distribution and retailing account for more than 80 cents of every food dollar spent in the United States.

|  |   |   |  |   |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| <p><b>Bacon</b><br/>1 lb.</p>  <p>Retail: \$19.99<br/>Farmer: \$1.04</p>            | <p><b>Top Sirloin Steak</b><br/>1 lb.</p>  <p>Retail: \$16.49<br/>Farmer: \$3.67</p> | <p><b>Bread</b><br/>Wheat Loaf</p>  <p>Retail: \$4.49<br/>Farmer: \$0.13</p>     | <p><b>Fresh Carrots</b><br/>5 lbs.</p>  <p>Retail: \$2.29<br/>Farmer: \$1.41</p>           | <p><b>Beer</b><br/>12-pack cans</p>  <p>Retail: \$16.99<br/>Farmer: \$0.06</p>   |
| <p><b>Corn Cereal</b><br/>18 oz. box</p>  <p>Retail: \$2.99<br/>Farmer: \$0.06</p> | <p><b>Tomatoes</b><br/>1 lb.</p>  <p>Retail: \$2.99<br/>Farmer: \$0.32</p>          | <p><b>Eggs</b><br/>1 dozen</p>  <p>Retail: \$6.49<br/>Farmer: \$2.84</p>        | <p><b>Flour</b><br/>All Purpose, 5 lbs.</p>  <p>Retail: \$6.89<br/>Farmer: \$0.44</p>     | <p><b>Boneless Ham</b><br/>1 lb.</p>  <p>Retail: \$12.98<br/>Farmer: \$1.04</p> |
| <p><b>Lettuce</b><br/>1 lb.</p>  <p>Retail: \$1.99<br/>Farmer: \$0.29</p>         | <p><b>Milk</b><br/>1 gallon, whole</p>  <p>Retail: \$4.39<br/>Farmer: \$1.83</p>   | <p><b>Fresh Apples</b><br/>2 lb.</p>  <p>Retail: \$4.99<br/>Farmer: \$2.20</p> | <p><b>Fresh Potatos</b><br/>Russet, 5 lbs.</p>  <p>Retail: \$3.99<br/>Farmer: \$0.55</p> | <p><b>Soda</b><br/>2 liters</p>  <p>Retail: \$1.29<br/>Farmer: \$0.06</p>      |

Farmer's share derived from USDA, NASS "Agricultural Prices," 2025. | Prices based on August 2025 data.  
 Retail prices based on Safeway (SE) brand except where noted. | \*Figure according to U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service

August, 2025

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