

# NCGA Position

Title: Global Climate Change

TBR Dec. 2021/EXP 2022

Position Number: V-A-2

Background: Weather variability significantly affects farmers, agricultural supply chains and our food supply. Farmers have always been impacted by rainfall events, flooding, shifting seasonal temperature patterns and frequent seasonal droughts. However, changing climates have led to more frequent and intense weather events in certain regions of the country. Corn farmers have continuously pushed the boundaries of innovation by investing in practices aimed at improving productivity. Farmers adopt practices on their farms that conserve soil and organic matter, all of which reduce or mitigate greenhouse gas emissions. Corn farmers support policies that help make their farms agronomically and financially more sustainable.

Policy Statements:

Support:

1. Market-based, voluntary opportunities for farmers to provide carbon reduction benefits and opportunities to contribute based on carbon offsets and carbon sequestration through crop production. (Int. 2020)
2. Federal policies at USDA that establish a program of information and full transparency for farmers regarding the voluntary marketing of on-farm agricultural greenhouse gas emission reductions, carbon sequestration benefits, and ecosystem credits used for compliance by other entities in any greenhouse gas and carbon reduction programs to ensure transparency for farmers. Such policies should establish standards that protect farmers from unfair practices regarding disclosure of how farmer data is used and shared as well as the methods for validating and quantifying assets and how asset value is determined. Further, such policies should require timely aggregate reporting of the economic value being offered to farmers for these credits by any entity involved in the buying, re-selling, or trading of domestic greenhouse gas, carbon sequestration, or ecosystem market credits; or their use of these on-farm reductions for state or federal compliance programs. Such policies should provide farmers with timely, accurate, and reliable market information; facilitate more informed marketing decisions; and promote competition in these credit markets. Farmer participation should be voluntary in any carbon market. (Int. 2021)
3. Policy that provides farmers and bioproduct producers market derived incentives for focusing on carbon sequestration and becoming carbon neutral or carbon positive. (Int. 2020)
4. Programs that build a carbon credit market that is inclusive of all practices and cropping systems used by producers that sequester carbon. (Int. 2021)
5. Federal crop insurance programs that are well-funded and managed so as to effectively and affordably help farmers deal with the financial risks associated with extreme weather events. (Int. 2020)
6. Federal and state conservation technical and financial assistance programs that can help farmers adopt and maintain the use of conservation practices, recognizing that often farmers do this on their own when provided practical and science-based guidance. (Int. 2020)

7. Policies that recognize and support early adopters of practices. (Int. 2020)
8. Climate legislation that allows farmers the ability to use the most effective and appropriate production practices to meet the needs of their operations. (Int. 2020)
8. Climate policy that supports research and innovation needed to develop new technologies that will help farmers respond to climate change and continue reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Policies must also support, or not restrict, access to innovative products, including transgenic seeds and pesticides, which are important for enabling agriculture to be part of the solution for global climate change. (Int. 2020)
9. Greenhouse gas reduction goals and targets that are science-based, measurable, and achievable over time. (Int. 2020)
10. Policy to help USDA expand research into measuring the economics and long-term benefits of conservation practices, including the role they can play in enhancing a farm's adaptive capacity to extreme weather events. (Int. 2020)
11. Improved collaborations across state and federal policies, to create better opportunities to share innovative technology and best practices and across geographies, in order to scale solutions. (Int. 2020)
12. USDA as the lead role on federal policies and programs involving agriculture and climate change related efforts. (Int. 2020)
13. EPA clarifying the de minimis character of biogenic carbon emissions from the processing of annual agricultural crops. (Int. 2020)
14. Federal infrastructure initiatives to make all aspects of the agricultural supply chain more resilient in the face of extreme weather, and in general more efficient with greater capacity. (Int. 2020)
15. Include the annually updated, Argonne-generated GREET model for any life-cycle analysis (LCA) of GHG emissions- for biofuels and insist that life-cycle accounting for all other transportation energy include a full accounting of their direct and indirect GHG and environmental impacts. (Int. 2020)

Oppose:

1. Oppose using international indirect land use change in calculation of the carbon footprint for renewable fuels so that renewable fuels are on an equal footing with petroleum and other industries.

Action Items:

**Stewardship Action Team**

1. Continue thorough life-cycle analysis of corn production and the end uses of corn, including livestock and corn-to-ethanol technology.

### **Ethanol Action Team**

1. Encourage the Department of Energy (DOE) to support policy, research, and infrastructure directed to the use of using corn cobs, stover, and corn kernel fiber as a fuel to generate steam and electricity and as a source of cellulosic feedstock for ethanol. Benefits include replacement of fossil fuels, a reduction of the carbon footprint, and a significant improvement to the energy ratio for growing and processing corn for ethanol in the near term.

### **Stewardship Action Team**

1. Fully explore through policy research the impacts of climate legislation on agriculture and biofuels such as the Rural Green Partnership.