



National Corn Growers Association  
**2016 POLICY  
AND POSITION PAPERS**

*As amended-  
Corn Congress New Orleans, LA.  
March 5, 2016*

Per NCGA Operating Procedures, resolutions adopted by Corn Congress shall expire based on the section of the Policy & Position Papers (aka Policy Book) in which they appear, and no later than the end of the calendar year three years following adoption. Each section will note an expiration date with the text "EXP." (for "expires") followed by the expiration year. Each section will also note the time for Action Team/Committee review with the text "TBR" (for "to be reviewed") followed by the December before the expiration year.

(For example, the Biotechnology/I-A-1 section will be marked "EXP. 2017" and "TBR DEC. 2016." If the resolutions in this section are not reviewed by the Action Team/Committee of jurisdiction for the issue in December 2016 and the Corn Congress takes no action in 2017, they will automatically expire and be removed from the Policy Book at the end of the calendar year 2017.)

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# NCGA Policy

## *What we stand for:*

- I. A commitment to meet the needs of our customers
- II. Government policy that promotes a thriving agricultural sector
- III. Improving our national infrastructure
- IV. Building a solid future for tomorrow's farmers
- V. Leaving our world in better shape than we found it

# NCGA Policy

## *What we stand for:*

- I. A commitment to meet the needs of our customers  
Demand for corn grows when customers are satisfied. To increase demand, we will work to make corn users more successful by:
  - A. Understanding and satisfying the customer
  - B. Providing quality products
  - C. Expanding domestic and global use of US corn and corn products
  - D. Supporting a comprehensive energy policy
  
- II. Government policy that promotes a thriving agricultural sector  
Farmers should operate America's farms with limited government involvement. We support:
  - A. Market-driven farm programs
  - B. Minimal, consistent regulation
  - C. Federal tax policy reform
  - D. Sufficient financial and credit programs
  
- III. Improving our national infrastructure  
Our competitive advantage depends on a solid infrastructure throughout the U.S. We support upgrading our transportation system.
  
- IV. Building a solid future for tomorrow's farmers  
We support an active research and education commitment by all segments of the corn industry and government.
  - A. Research and commercialization
  - B. Commodity group cooperation
  - C. Rural Development/Value added resources
  - D. Structure and the marketplace
  - E. Technology
  - F. Communication and education
  - G. Information programs—livestock/poultry
  
- V. Leaving our world in better shape than we found it. Farming, using best management practices, will improve the environment.
  - A. Environmental policy
  - B. Water quality
  - C. Crop protection use policy
  - D. Conservation programs
  
- VI. We believe the U.S. Government should balance the budget.

# **I. A commitment to meet the needs of our customers**

Demand for corn grows when customers are satisfied. To increase demand, we will work to make corn users more successful by:

- A. Understanding and Satisfying the Customer
- B. Providing Quality Products
- C. Expanding domestic and global use of US corn and corn products
- D. Supporting a Comprehensive Energy Policy

# NCGA Position

Title: Biotechnology

TBR Dec. 2016/EXP 2017

Position Number: I-A-1

Background: The development of biotechnology continues to demonstrate great benefits for society. Biotechnology offers corn growers improved efficiencies and economic opportunities when managed wisely and with regulatory oversight based on sound science. We seek to increase worldwide consumer acceptance of biotechnology through the dissemination of science-based information. Responsible and accountable management by biotechnology providers, producers, suppliers, processors, and grain merchandisers is imperative. We must continue to address our customers' concerns while protecting our traditional markets.

## Resolution/position:

1. Demand technology providers to fully engage all regulatory options and stewardship practices for biotech events.
2. Support the specific objective of regulatory synchronization and mutual acceptance of biotech agricultural products in trade negotiations.
3. Support the development of internationally accepted, science-based and consistent "low-level" Adventitious Presence policy.
4. Support a complete, science-based, yet expeditious, regulatory process in the U.S. for all biotechnology events.
5. Work with U.S. government and other stakeholders to help encourage timely and predictable approval of new traits and stack in conjunction with the development and implementation of an appropriate Low Level Presence policy in current major corn export market countries.
6. Support the commercial release of biotech corn events or combination of events subsequent to consultation with and approval by the Trade Policy and Biotechnology Action Team. These events must also receive a timely, full approval by the relevant U.S. and Japanese regulatory agencies, and the product registrant must be aggressively pursuing approval in every country or bloc that requires approval prior to importation of corn, corn products, or food containing corn ingredients.
7. Recognizing the importance of every customer of U.S. corn and corn products, insist that every technology provider conducts due diligence in bringing traited products to market in a manner that does not disrupt domestic markets or international trade. If international trade to a major importing country will be disrupted by that country's non-functioning (e.g. lack of: transparency, predictability, science-based) regulatory system, the technology provider will initiate discussions with growers and end users to maintain a limited and stewarded commercialization system that channels products to appropriate markets. This stewarded system including appropriate liability concerns will be reviewed annually by TPBAT and recognized through KBYG (Know Before You Grow) and be in place for the marketing year.
8. Encourage the mediation and resolution of biotech issues in a manner, which limits disruption of domestic and international corn marketing.
9. Support the release of biotech corn that is intended for a specific end use and that has limited regulatory approval only through closed marketing systems or carefully conceived identity preservation systems that secure our ability to market corn and corn products worldwide.



10. Any sale of seed of non-regulated production of an output trait must be accompanied by a suitable containment system that satisfactorily addresses issues of grower liability and maintains the integrity of that particular commodities' distribution system.
11. Any production of a plant derived biologic for non-agronomic use must be accompanied by a containment system derived from a scientific risk assessment that addresses all environmental risks and maintains the integrity of that particular commodities' distribution system.
12. Oppose delays caused by USDA's PPA and NEPA review of herbicide tolerant transgenic products with Environmental Impact Statements, that duplicate EPA's jurisdiction, commissioned without scientific justification. Likewise, oppose delays of the EPA's NEPA reviews of new herbicide products based upon USDA delays regarding the complementing products.
13. Responsibility for an isolation barrier should remain with the producer of a specialty commodity rather than being placed upon commodity crops surrounding the specialty producer.
14. Request that biotechnology providers assure the availability of accurate, affordable, timely tests to detect the presence of each biotech event. Tests must be available prior to the marketing of new biotech events.
15. Support the protection of farmers who have planted approved biotechnology products without threat of judicial proceedings requiring them to terminate crops.
16. Encourage improvement of existing grain channeling systems, including training.
17. Require the seed industry to clearly label and identify the approval status of all events and to augment this effort with an aggressive communications program targeting grower customers (including advertising and sales of seed corn).
18. Require the seed industry to clearly identify the approval status of all events and augment this effort with aggressive communications and advertising programs that target corn growers.
19. Encourage the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), registrants and the research community to work closely with producers to develop resistance management strategies that are workable for producers.
20. Seed companies should be required to disclose the variety ID number of all hybrids offered prior to point of sale.
21. Require the seed industry to aggressively promote Insect Resistance Management (IRM) and Weed Resistance Management (WRM) in their seed sales strategy.
22. Continue collaborations with federal agencies to develop an educational package to increase producer compliance in proper biotech stewardship.
23. Work with Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) in developing merchandising and process verification standards for goods that may or may not contain biotech corn.
24. Acknowledge EPA's determination on refuge levels and commit to educating corn producers on any changes in refuge requirements in conjunction with commercial providers of technology. Support the

science based refinement of refuge requirements and new applications of refuge compliance tools that continue to allow for effective management of refuge.

25. Support Food and Drug Administration's efforts to provide guidance for voluntary labeling that indicates whether foods have or have not been developed using bioengineering to identify attributes that are important to consumers in a manner that is truthful and not misleading.
26. Oppose individual state mandates to require labeling of foods derived from agricultural biotechnology. Support a national voluntary food labeling program that is science-based and has preemption of individual state labeling laws.
27. Promote the positive contributions of biotechnology as it relates to human and animal health, the environment, grain quality, and production benefits.
28. Support public funding of land grant institutions to disseminate science based information-about biotechnology.
29. Encourage biotech providers to avoid the use of antibiotic resistant markers.
30. Request seed companies make available at no charge, the percent of transgenic purity of seed.
31. Technology agreements should indemnify producers from liability if they follow regulations and guidelines provided by the biotech provider and seed companies. Further, if a producer is found innocent of alleged trait fraud, the biotech provider should reimburse the producer's incurred costs.
32. Support the strict enforcement of science-based isolation and containment requirements for the research, production, and processing of all crops that are not approved for food and feed use in the United States in order to protect the commercial grain industry and food supply.
33. Support a science-based analysis and continued research of Genetic Use Restriction Technologies in corn.
34. Encourage uniform seed regulation legislation.
35. For approved biotech events, the current patent holder or any party, including 3<sup>rd</sup> party entities choosing to market or charged with maintaining a biotech trait post-patent must maintain regulatory approvals for use until the trait is reasonably out of the commercial corn supply.
36. Support the development of a fairly constructed framework to allow for the existence of a generic marketplace when agricultural biotech traits expire from patent protection. This framework needs to fairly assess costs of maintaining international registrations to commercially interested parties following an agreed upon grace responsibility period by the original patent holder. In conjunction, data packages/dossiers necessary for maintaining registrations should also be made available at a negotiated value and in due time to insure no lapse in regulatory status. Prior to patent expiration, research licensing agreements for the intent of post-patent commercialization would be available at a negotiated value within a sufficient development window for a market driven transition. This framework should not negatively impact the value of intellectual property in agricultural biotechnology or significantly alter technology development incentives.

37. Support efficient science-based regulation of biotechnology products based on the product characteristics, not the process used to produce it, while not applying undue regulatory burden to products of precision breeding innovations.

# NCGA Position

Title: Marketable Characteristics of Corn TBR Dec. 2017/EXP 2018

Position Number: I-A-2

Background: The primary purpose of the official U.S. standards for grain should be to describe and certify the quality of grain as accurately as practical. They should:

- Define uniform and accepted descriptive terms to facilitate trade in grain;
- Provide information to aid in determining grain storability;
- Promote the retention of the quality of the grain during the marketing process;
- Offer end users the best possible information from which to determine end product yield, quality and value;
- Provide the framework necessary for markets to establish grain quality improvement incentives.

Resolution/Position:

1. Support the development of a national grain quality strategy as new concepts in grain quality emerge that are of importance to end users in addition to the current grading standards that will be to the benefit of the U.S. corn farmer and strengthen our competitive advantage.
2. Support research, development and testing of end-use quality characteristics of processing and/or breeding of corn for the benefit of our customers.
3. Support the development and standardization of equipment and sampling/testing procedures and calibration that would quickly and accurately determine the intrinsic value of corn, and encourage the market to reward that value.
4. Determine grain marketing value on a dry matter and intrinsic value basis.
5. Require that only those products that meet USDA organic standard receive an organic label.
6. Work to inform policymakers and regulators as to how our food system works to ensure a safe food supply. Any laws regarding food safety should enhance food safety and be implemented in a way that is practical for all farmers and the entire food industry.

# NCGA Position

Title: Mycotoxins

TBR Dec. 2017/EXP 2018

Position Number: I-A-3

## Resolution/Position:

1. Support research to minimize the impact of mycotoxins on corn production and food safety.
2. Support the efforts of and will cooperate with the Aflatoxin Mitigation Center of Excellence to mitigate and eliminate mycotoxins in corn and corn products.
3. Support research for alternate safe uses of aflatoxin-contaminated corn and its products.
4. Support mycotoxin standards based on sound scientific data.
5. Support uniform standards for the sampling and testing procedures used to determine mycotoxin contamination levels.
6. Promote biotechnology's role in reducing mycotoxins in corn production.
7. Support the research, development and testing of hybrids and traits for resistance to mycotoxins.
8. Support the use of "clay binders" and other technologies, if created, for mycotoxin suppression in feed in all states.
9. Support the exploration of a nation-wide one test result strategy for aflatoxin to determine marketability and crop insurance reimbursement.
10. Support the use of Bio-Controls (atoxigenics) to significantly reduce Aflatoxin in corn and support the development and EPA approval/labeling of next generation (multi-strain) products.
11. Support the ability to blend corn with 0-500 parts per billion of aflatoxin to meet FDA guidelines.

# NCGA Position

Title: Trade Policy

TBR Dec. 2016/EXP 2017

Position Number: I-B-1

Background: The export of corn and corn products is vital to the nation's economy, its balance of payments and the profitability of corn production. The development and maintenance of fair and open global trade practices and policies are essential.

U.S. corn farmers support world agricultural production based on comparative economic advantage and endorse multilateral liberalization of trade as a way to raise the standard of living of all people.

Support a consistent U.S. trade policy so corn and corn products will not be disadvantaged for the advancement of another sector.

## Resolution/Position:

1. Support passage of the Trans-Pacific Partnership.
2. Initiate and support programs to build long term global demand for corn and corn products.
3. Support worldwide elimination of export subsidies and barriers to free trade.
4. Develop and provide corn products to meet the demands of modern global consumption.
5. Support normal trade relations for all trading partners.
6. Seek resumption of normal trade relations with Cuba.
  - a) Until resumption of normal trade relations allow U.S. banks to issue credit in U.S. dollars on current exemptions. (Ag and Medicine).
7. Oppose any form of cargo preference.
8. Support exemption of food, feed, agricultural products, medicine and medical supplies from any and all unilateral sanctions imposed on foreign countries by the United States.
9. Support compensation for producers for any economic loss or the loss of reputation as a reliable supplier if U.S. government policy inhibits exports of corn or value-added products.
10. Encourage the U.S. government to respond appropriately when artificial barriers or unsubstantiated restrictions are imposed on U.S. agricultural products.
11. Support appropriate use of U.S. antidumping laws and strengthen international laws to prevent abuse.
12. Support P.L. 480 Title 1, loans, Title II, the Food for Progress Program and the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program.
13. Support the reauthorization of Trade Promotion Authority.
14. Support continued membership by the U.S. in the World Trade Organization (WTO).

15. Support the authority of WTO to arbitrate trade disputes and implement enforcement actions.
16. Initiate when appropriate and/or strongly support efforts to remove anti-dumping duties, tariffs, quotes and any other trade restricting devices which impede the importation of fertilizer and other crop production inputs.
17. Support the opening of international beef markets by utilizing policy that allows bone-in beef product from cattle less than 30 months of age as part of a stair step effort to eventual full OIE approval, and call for immediate adoption of this policy with all interested global trading parties.
18. Support the USAID International Disaster and Famine Assistance account for food aid "local and regional purchase" and address issues regarding nutrition, food safety, availability and reliability of supply, training and gift and country origin labeling.
19. As a matter of U.S. competitiveness, Cap and Trade legislation or regulations should take into account the status and impacts of international climate agreements, particularly the participation of other major worldwide economies.
20. Oppose any global treaties that create environmental regulations resulting in a competitive disadvantage for U.S. agriculture.

# NCGA Position

Title: Trade Negotiations

TBR Dec. 2016/EXP 2017

Position Number: I-B-2

Background: U.S. government policy must clearly and consistently promote the liberalization of the world's trading system through both multilateral and bilateral negotiations that assure U.S. corn and corn products full access to world markets.

The U.S. corn industry is highly dependent on other sectors of American agriculture. By fully analyzing trade agreement effects on customers, we can ascertain long term effects on the corn industry.

## Resolution/Position:

1. Support efforts of the U.S. trade negotiators to increase access to foreign markets.
2. Analyze and support trade agreements that enhance market access for corn and corn products while protecting programs that are necessary to ensure a strong viable agriculture economy. Support WTO compliance.
3. Actively seek free trade agreements, to assure the greatest possible opportunities for U.S. corn growers.
4. Insist the U.S. government ensure that the agricultural negotiating team includes adequate experience, expertise and knowledge of U.S. production agriculture.
5. Support sanitary and phytosanitary regulations consistent with uniform, science-based, internationally accepted standards.
6. Support NAFTA and CAFTA-DR and oppose efforts to reopen the agreements.
7. Oppose non-transparent state trading enterprises.
8. Support elimination of trade barriers for agricultural products derived from biotechnology.
9. Support WTO trade negotiations that allow greater foreign market access for U.S. agricultural products without compromising the basic integrity of U.S. domestic farm policy.



# NCGA Position

Title: Foreign Market Development

TBR Dec. 2016/EXP 2017

Position Number: I-B-3

Background: Effective foreign market development programs for corn and corn product exports involving the cooperator program through the U.S. Grains Council (USGC), USA Poultry and Egg Export Council (USAPEEC), and U.S. Meat Export Federation (USMEF) should be supported by funding from state checkoff programs and the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS). These market development programs should maximize efficiency and coordination between NCGA and USGC to expand the uses of corn and corn products.

## Resolution/Position:

1. Support USGC, USAPEEC, and USMEF to develop and expand international markets.
2. Support funding for the Market Access Program and the Foreign Market Development Program to enhance the competitive advantage of U.S. corn and corn products.
3. Support use of GSM-102 as a commercial export credit guarantee program for corn, corn co-products, livestock and poultry products without limitations to the type or amount of commodities purchased.
4. Encourage USDA to promote, support, and expand the facilities guarantee program throughout the world to develop infrastructure that facilitates U.S. agricultural exports.
5. The USDA should retain control of agricultural export promotion programs.
6. Work to increase certainty of funding and authorization for the Market Access Program and Foreign Market Development program.

# NCGA Position

Title: Domestic Demand

TBR Dec. 2018/EXP 2019

Position Number: I-C

Background: Support diversified, expanding and long-term domestic demand for corn.

Resolution/Position:

1. Support a coordinated and aggressive effort to promote increased consumption of meat, poultry, fish and dairy products.
2. Support the development and promotion of value-added products from the corn industry.
3. Support efforts by the US livestock and poultry industries including:
  - a) Responsible, competitive, environmentally-sound production expansion
  - b) Educational programming for the government and general public;
  - c) Collaborations with commodity organizations and other affiliated interests to-strengthen-the livestock and poultry industries.
4. Support legislation that creates tax and investment incentives for individual corn growers that will encourage their participation in farmer owned value-added projects.
5. Support the use of corn derived ingredients in food and beverage products.
6. Support Biobased Products:
  - a) All agencies purchase biobased products identified by USDA as long as they are priced reasonably, perform as needed and are available for use.
  - b) Establish an equal footing of validation of biobased products with petrochemical based products by reducing the Building for Environmental and Economic Stability (BEES) and other unreasonable requirements;
  - c) Establish a pathway for approval of intermediate chemicals/feedstocks thus reducing the burden of proof on individual items;
  - d) Strengthen compliance through reducing loophole provisions.

# NCGA Position

Title: Ethanol

TBR Dec. 2018/EXP 2019

Position Number: I-D-1

Background: NCGA believes it is in the best interest of the US consumer to have a comprehensive National Energy Plan, which includes renewable fuels. Renewable fuels will provide an environmentally clean, domestically produced fuel, which will contribute to our independence from foreign oil. In addition, rural communities benefit from the additional jobs created through the development of this renewable fuel industry.

## Resolution/Position:

1. Support the current RFS.
2. Continue to develop ethanol policy while working with partners when possible.
3. Work with Congress, the administration including both regulatory and non-regulatory agencies to ensure successful implementation of the RFS for the benefit of corn farmers.
4. Work with all partners in the ethanol industry to create a unified strategy to expand ethanol usage and production.
5. Support the science and research to allow corn starch ethanol to qualify as an advanced biofuel.
6. Support legislation to remove restrictions that disqualify corn-based ethanol from consideration as an advanced biofuel under the expanded Renewable Fuels Standard while maintaining the performance requirements of advanced biofuels.
7. Support establishment of federal fuel standards which increase octane requirements in finished gasoline through higher blends of ethanol for use in higher compression engines for improved fuel economy and air quality.
8. Support implementation of a domestic energy policy that expands the use of renewable fuels, such as ethanol, by supporting favorable tax incentives. (i.e. NCGA initiate a major effort with member states to enact state legislation to reduce vehicle registration fees on flexible fuel vehicles.)
9. Support equal tax credit for all ethanol regardless of feedstock.
10. Support reforming ethanol tax policy to provide an incentive for FFV vehicles, infrastructure and flex fuels.
11. Through legislation require that starting in Model Year (MY) 2017 50 percent of all gasoline powered passenger vehicles sold in the U.S. will be flex fuel capable of operating on higher blends of ethanol. Work with the automobile manufacturers to increase the percent for FFV vehicles sold in the U.S. to 70 percent by MY 2022.
12. Support working with automobile manufacturers and other partners to ensure flex-fuel vehicle (FFV) incentives and higher blends of ethanol are part of the mid-term review for the CAFÉ/GHG emissions rules.
13. Promote the expanded use of ethanol, and the development and usage of renewable fuels (such as: E-85, E diesel (ethanol-blended diesel), Biodiesel, Ethanol based aviation fuel):

- a) Requiring all new flexible fuel vehicles qualifying for CAFE credits to be clearly identified at the time of sale with a yellow fuel cap and with a permanent badge or emblem on the quarter panel or tailgate; and
  - b) Requiring that the fuel loaded into a new flexible fuel vehicle by a manufacturer be E85; and
  - c) Requiring vehicle manufacturers and retail dealers to provide new purchasers of flexible fuel vehicles with information about the economic benefits, environmental benefits, octane enrichment and energy security benefits of E-85 use and pump locations; and
  - d) Reinstate the CAFE Credits for FFV vehicles either through regulation or legislation; and
  - e) Support the use of the term Flex Fuel.
  - f) Support use of tax incentives for the consumer to purchase flex fuel and flex fuel vehicles.
  - g) Support making more cars flex fuel compatible, including the conversion of non-flex fuel vehicles if possible. Encourage EPA testing and certification of conversion kits.
  - h) Support development of ASTM standards for ethanol blends.
14. Secure incentives and requirements to achieve nationwide installation of flex fuel pumps and related infrastructure.
  15. Support and promote fuel cell technology with utilization of ethanol as a primary energy source.
  16. Oppose any effort to create a government-owned grain reserve for the purpose of an ethanol reserve.
  17. Support aggressive funding for Distillers Dried Grain research to increase livestock and poultry feeding, including standardized methodologies for testing.
  18. Ethanol derived from materials other than corn, such as switchgrass, wood chips, corn stalks and corn fiber, etc., can be complimentary to ethanol derived from corn but not serve as a replacement.
  19. Support the development of multi-use renewable fuel pipelines in the U.S., utilizing various available funding sources such as a loan guarantee program for pipeline projects.
  20. Support E25 as the minimum Underwriters Laboratory (UL) certification standard for all newly manufactured gasoline dispensers.
  21. Support proposals prohibiting oil companies, through franchise contracts, sales agreements or other means (such as restricting use of company credit cards) that prevent a fuel retailer from making flex fuel blends or other biofuels available for sale.
  22. Support EPA/ASTM emissions research and efforts to legalize utilization of higher blends of ethanol for conventional vehicles.
  23. Support timely implementation of proactive communications effort to set the record straight with respect to ethanol production, food prices and corn supply.
  24. Support federal funding for research and commercialization of the utilization of biomass to replace natural gas/coal in corn-to-ethanol and other processing plants.
  25. Support simplification of the regulatory process related to renewable fuels under the Clean Air Act.
  26. Support corn and ethanol industry research and investment into economic and sustainable low carbon technologies to further improve GHG accounting score.

27. Support using marginal petroleum source emissions as the petroleum baseline when calculating GHG regulations for biofuels.
28. If biogenic carbon emissions are counted in calculations for GHG emissions from fermentation and/or combustion of biomass and/or biofuels, full credit must be given for the GHG uptake and sequestration from the growing crop.
29. Support industry efforts to address the dispenser certifications that are required by fire marshals and other regulatory officials in order to sell high level blends of ethanol.
30. Support the development of scientific research to allow EPA to grant approval for the use of higher ethanol blends in all gasoline vehicles.
31. Will not support any legislation that attempts to change air quality and/or vehicle standards from U.S. EPA Control to California Air Resources Board (CARB) Control.
32. Support and work with Missouri on their use of E15 and promotion of American Ethanol.
33. Support legislation to require EPA to use the most common fuel used in gasoline vehicles and small gas engines for emissions certification requirements.
34. Support incentives that promote the expansion of ethanol and renewable fuels.
35. Support research and development to increase the production efficiency of ethanol. Support federal funding for the operation of the National Corn to Ethanol Research Center.
36. Support equal treatment for ethanol blended fuel regarding the Reid vapor pressure waiver for conventional gasoline blended with ethanol in the summer months.
37. Support legislation that protects fuel retailers from false claims of engine damage due to ethanol.
38. Support expanded use of corn kernel fiber ethanol as a cellulosic fuel.
39. Support efforts to certify storage and dispensing equipment for ethanol blends above E25 through Underwriters Laboratory.
40. Support working with the auto industry, the ethanol industry, and oil interests to move higher octane gasoline with higher blends of ethanol into the marketplace.
41. Support unified labeling for new blends of ethanol.
42. Support extending federal tax incentives for retailers installing flex fuel infrastructure.
43. Support U.S. Grains Council export programs for domestically-produced ethanol.

# NCGA Position

Title: Energy Policy

TBR Dec. 2018/EXP 2019

Position Number: I-D-2

Background: Energy sources are a primary consideration for U.S. agriculture's competitive advantage. Agriculture should be included as a source of energy to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

## Resolution/Position:

1. Promote a national energy policy which would develop domestic energy supplies while displacing foreign oil reduces our dependence on foreign oil and ensures national energy security with environmentally friendly, domestically produced natural resources, renewable resources including ethanol and its derivatives.
2. Congress should support equitable incentives for both domestic renewable fuels production and domestic oil production. If ethanol incentives are removed, then oil incentives should also be removed. All energy sources should receive equitable tax or subsidy treatment.
3. Support programs and policies to ensure priority availability of all forms of energy at reasonable and stable prices for production, transportation, processing and marketing of agricultural products.
4. Suspend so-called international indirect land use change penalties on corn ethanol until a scientifically-based, transparent, reliable and verifiable metric is created to determine the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions of all fuels in the U.S. transportation marketplace.
5. Oppose additional federal taxes on fuel used in production agriculture.
6. Support continuation of the electrical loan programs of the Rural Utilities Service in agricultural areas.
7. Oppose the privatization of Rural Public Power Districts.
8. Secure the role of corn ethanol in the California Low Carbon Fuel Standards (or other similar state or regional initiatives) through scientific comments, research and other means.
9. Energy costs impact the profitability of corn growers. Support efforts to keep energy prices low.
10. Oppose regulations for electric utility restructuring that would shift costs from large industrial users to farm and residential users.
11. Support efforts to use corn derived renewable feed stock for the production of electricity and other forms of energy.
12. Support the use of bio-fuels and lubricants by federal, state and local government-owned vehicles.
13. Support active participation in the 25X25 initiative, ensuring the corn industry's interests are well represented.
14. Government research dollars should include corn and corn fiber as a significant biomass feedstock in the production of biofuels.

15. Government policy, taxes and programs should not differentiate in the distribution and retail marketing of ethanol derived from different biomass feedstocks.
16. Examine the impact of current highly variable (boutique fuels) state fuel content regulations to facilitate easier ethanol blending.
17. Support the extension of the wind energy production tax credit.
18. Support research and the development of commercial renewable fertilizer production including production plants utilizing wind power and other sources.
19. Support wind energy production tax credit and other incentives for both ordinary and passive income.
20. Support biobutanol from corn and corn products.
21. Support the development of rail, trucking, pipeline and storage infrastructure to address the rural and agricultural need for liquid petroleum, and natural gas.

## II. Government policy that promotes a thriving agricultural sector

Farmers should operate America's farms with limited government involvement.  
We support:

- A. Market-driven Farm Programs
- B. Minimal, Consistent Regulation
- C. Federal Tax Policy Reform
- D. Sufficient Financial and Credit Programs



# NCGA Position

Title: Farm Policies

TBR Dec. 2016/EXP 2017

Position Number: II-A-1

Background: In future farm policy we support these long-term concepts to ensure prosperity for America's agricultural industry.

## Resolution/Position:

1. Evaluate and support farm policy that will ensure that American farmers are:
  - Globally competitive,
  - Market responsive,
  - Environmentally responsibleand that provides producers with:
  - Access to world markets,
  - Access to capital,
  - Access to advances of technology,
  - Risk Management.
2. Support a program that:
  - a) is compatible with organization goals for WTO negotiations;
  - b) allows producers to make business and planting decisions based on market forces;
  - c) allows market forces to determine supply rather than government decision making;
  - d) allows payments to all size farms;
  - e) promotes profitability but does not guarantee it;
  - f) includes voluntary conservation practices and is adequately funded to encourage program participation to continue conservation of land and other natural resources;
  - g) will provide federal funding for research, domestic and international market development;
  - h) will provide federal funding delivered to state and local control for rural economic development;
  - i.) includes revenue-based insurance as a component of a safety net;
  - j.) is fiscally responsible; and
  - k.) is fair and equitable to all corn producers.
3. Oppose any effort to lower the payment limits.
4. USDA should use the Posted County Price as the average of the two adjusted terminal prices for the county.
5. Oppose lowering of Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) limits to qualify for farm program benefits below current levels.
6. Maintain and fund a crop-specific FSA program designed to complement the crop insurance program.
7. Support a farm bill that includes both farm programs and a nutrition title.

# NCGA Position

Title: Farm Program Implementation

TBR Dec. 2016/EXP 2017

Position Number: II-A-2

Background: NCGA is committed to making farm programs work for producers. We support the following program provisions.

## Resolution/Position:

1. USDA should ensure that after a farmer chooses to update his bases or yields, the Farm Service Agency cannot go back to bases and yields less than what can be proven. Additionally, the producer should be able to update bases and yields as CRP acres are returned to production.
2. Farmers who have planted crops such as sweet corn, hay crops, or pulse crops should not be subject to a reduction of FSA-defined total crop acres in the calculation of farm base.
3. Support updating bases and yields by using LDP's, crop insurance yields, or 3 similar farms, to reflect current cropping practices.
4. Support using current farm programs until a new program is law. Implementation of the new program should occur prior to first program crop being planted.
5. County-based Commodity Programs should be paid based on the physical location of the tracts within a farm unit.

# NCGA Position

Title: Risk Management

TBR Dec. 2016/EXP 2017

Position Number: II-A-3

Background: Agricultural producers cannot control the dual risks of weather and price. However, with revenue-based risk management tools, producers can avoid the disastrous effects of low yields and low prices. The subsidy structure of the federal crop insurance program should encourage producers to insure adequate revenue to avoid devastating losses but must not artificially stimulate production.

Producers must have timely information to make appropriate risk management decisions. The Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC), the private crop insurance companies and their agents must make every effort to provide cost and coverage information to producers as early as possible.

A safety net is defined as a combination of risk management tools available to producers that have the ability to protect against revenue and production losses due to circumstances beyond their control.

## Resolution/Position:

1. Support revenue-based risk management tools for all states with proportional federal cost sharing for price and yield risks and proportional cost sharing on increased levels of coverage.
2. Support the development of new and innovative risk management products to provide a wide array of tools to help producers manage price and yield risks.
3. Support risk management products that provide payment for actual losses, including losses incurred from delayed or prevented plantings, arising from disease or other natural causes.
4. Support no hard dollar cap on the government's share of the crop insurance premium.
5. Support a replant policy that will enable producers to replant with the crop of the producers' choice.
6. Risk Management Agency should calculate premiums on an actuarially sound, county basis.
7. In order to receive disaster assistance payments from the federal government, farmers should be required to have purchased at least catastrophic federal crop insurance.
8. Support the reinstatement of an insured's actual yield history excluding quality loss adjustments if the insured is using an approved product or practice to mitigate such quality loss.
9. Support requiring crop insurance companies to compensate producers for interest costs incurred while crop insurance claims are pending, under litigation or in arbitration, at similar interest rates to those producers are charged on premiums owed.
10. Support a one sample, one test policy accepted by first purchaser, RMA and regulatory agency for mycotoxins.
11. Support changing current planting date limitations to better reflect modern agronomic practices.
12. Crop insurance companies should be required to disclose to the policy owner justifications for denying a claim.

13. Support the annual updating of county t-yields.
14. Support crop insurance coverage for crop losses caused by man-made floods.
15. Support revising the corn and soybean replant maximum payment allowed, to more accurately reflect the division of expenses and actual cost of replanting.
16. Support increased producer input and advocacy in RMA program development and implementation.
17. Support the study of alternatives and changes to crop insurance, including a tax deferred savings account equal to insurance premiums that could be used when qualifying for a claim.
18. Support a process that will allow producers to certify a yearly APH yield by using comparison yields or county "T yields" in cases where an insured crop was destroyed by an uninsured peril.
19. Support the Risk Management Agency to re-review the actuarial rating process and rates for irrigation and dry land practices on all crops on a state by state basis.
20. Support rule changes to make individual tracts recognized by the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA) eligible for crop insurance as an individual insurable unit.
21. Support the re-evaluation of crop insurance high risk maps for all crops and require RMA to notify the landowner and tenant of impending changes to high-risk maps.
22. Oppose the coupling of unreasonable conservation compliance requirements to eligibility for federal crop insurance subsidies.
23. Support the current public/private partnership for the delivery of the federal crop insurance program and keep implementation with private crop insurance agents, not government agencies.
24. Encourage the crop insurance companies to use the federal dollar limit as determined by RMA to determine mandatory audit levels.
25. Work with RMA to develop more flexible rules for the interseeding of conservation cover crops into crops for harvest.
26. All loss claims must be made by the end of the insurance period, the final insurance date should not end before 45 days after harvest price is determined.
27. Support the current prevent plant provisions offered by RMA, as they are proven actuarially sound; this includes retaining the 1 in 4 planting provision and the 60% level of PP coverage with an option to buy up the level of PP coverage.

# NCGA Position

Title: Minimal, Consistent Regulation

TBR Dec. 2016/EXP 2017

Position Number: II-B

## Resolution/Position:

1. Support accurate reporting of crop and utilization statistics by the USDA.
2. Support the full reimbursement of legal costs associated with unsuccessful litigation brought by state or federal regulatory agencies against producers.
3. Farmers who do not have a service center in their home county should be allowed to choose an office of their preference.
4. Support maintaining the elected county committee system.
5. Support cooperative agreements for states to perform warehouse examinations in an efficient manner protecting the local interest.
6. Support member states in their efforts to protect the right to farm laws. All producers of agricultural products who are in regulatory compliance should be encouraged to continue their operations by all levels of government.
7. Support agricultural exemptions from the Environmental Protection Agency's Spill Prevention Containment and Control ruling.
8. Oppose the use of models that are not based on replicable, transparent and sound science in the development of regulation and legislation affecting the corn industry.
9. Support agricultural farm operation policies that grant farm families full ability to make reasonable good faith decisions in the involvement of each family member engaging or engaged in farming activities.
10. Support hearings by the House and Senate Homeland Security Committees regarding Freedom of Information Act requests and the potential national security risk producers may have by releasing of such information.
11. Landowners should be able to build on a 100 year flood plain if appropriately planned, built up to protect for flooding, and adequately insured.
12. We oppose changing current 100-year flood plain standards to a 500-year flood plain standard.

# NCGA Position

Title: Federal Tax Policy Reform

TBR Dec. 2016/EXP 2017

Position Number: II-C

## Resolution/Position:

1. Support the following positions that strive to ensure the long-term continuity and smooth transition between generations of family-owned, agriculturally-based businesses:
  - a) \$5 million exemption from an estate tax indexed for inflation
  - b) incentives for farm transfers, including stepped up basis
  - c) one time capital gain exemption
  - d) business transition program
  - e) gift tax exclusion
2. Work to maintain a minimum \$500,000 deduction limit, indexed for inflation, for qualified equipment under IRS Sec. 179, small business expensing.
3. Support incentives for capital investments.
4. Support repeal of the alternative minimum tax.
5. Support legislation to redefine hedging to allow producers who replace commodities with offsetting futures and options positions of similar commodities to have the profit or loss on those futures or options positions taxed as ordinary income or loss rather than as capital gain or loss.
6. Support elimination of capital gains tax or any method to reduce capital gains taxes, including rate reductions and indexing a property's basis to inflation.
7. Support the continued use of commodity wages for agricultural employees.
8. Support the purchase of inputs financed by a lending subsidiary of the vendor to be deductible at the time of purchase.
9. Support legislation to make capital losses fully deductible over a short (preferably 5 year) period.
10. Support expansion of the 1031 provision of the federal tax code to include investment in agricultural value-added ventures.
11. Work for permanent Bonus Depreciation for new capital equipment purchases.
12. Support legislation that would create a federal tax incentive for businesses and individuals who invest in renewable energy related research and demonstration projects that benefit corn producers.
13. Urge the President and Congress of the United States to address the current fiscal issues in an expeditious timeline so that planned sequestration does not have unintended consequences on the safety and supply of US food.
14. Work to maintain the cash method of accounting for farming businesses with no limitations for tax purposes.

# NCGA Position

Title: Farm Credit

TBR Dec. 2016/EXP 2017

Position Number: II-D

## Resolution/Position:

1. Support legislation and/or administrative procedures to maintain the availability of agricultural credit at competitive interest rates in a timely manner.
2. Oppose consolidation of banking interests that will limit rural lending.
3. Support beginning farmer loan programs at the federal and state levels.
4. Farm Storage Facility Loan Program
  - a) Support the elimination of the requirement to pledge land as collateral or to otherwise obtain an irrevocable letter of credit from a private lender, irrespective of the loan amount.
  - b) Support a 20-year maximum loan period and permitting producers to elect the maximum period without regard to loan amount.
  - c) Allow local condominium type storage to qualify for the program.

# NCGA Position

Title: Agricultural Immigrant Labor

TBR Dec. 2016/EXP 2017

Position Number: II-E

## Resolution/Position:

1. Support enactment of immigration legislation that will provide a sufficient work force for agricultural producers and processors.
2. Support immigration policy that protects from penalty, employers of non-U.S. citizens when those employers make reasonable efforts to document immigration status.
3. Support securing the borders of the United States to facilitate the mainstreaming of undocumented residents of the United States to documented residents of the United States



### **III. Improving our national infrastructure**

Our competitive advantage depends on a solid infrastructure throughout the U.S.  
We support upgrading our Transportation System.

# NCGA Position

Title: Transportation Policy

TBR Dec. 2017/EXP 2018

Position Number: III-A-1

Background: Transportation issues are a significant factor in market development for corn and related products. We must aggressively work with the U.S. transportation leaders in the public and private sector to resolve transportation barriers that affect agriculture, both domestically and internationally.

## Resolution/Position:

1. Transportation Research
  - a) Support further research and development of a nationwide transportation network that is economically sound and will provide a foundation for our future agricultural transportation needs.
  - b) Encourage the federal government to identify economic consequences of the inefficiencies of our transportation infrastructure.
  - c) Have a long-term transportation strategy to address domestic and foreign markets. This strategy will be developed from a comprehensive study that includes present and future demand of markets and all modes of transportation.
  
2. Inland Waterways
  - a) Support the immediate modernization of the inland waterway transportation system with trust funds prioritized for adding and/or updating Locks 25, 24, 22, 21 and 20 on the Mississippi River and the LaGrange and Peoria Locks on the Illinois River to 1200 ft. structure, and extending guidewalls at Mississippi Lock and Dams 14 through 18; moorings at Locks 12, 14, 18, and 24; switch boats at Locks 11 through 13.
  - b) Oppose using the Inland Waterway Trust Fund for operations and maintenance.
  - c) The federal government and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should repair, maintain, and upgrade channel and levee systems in the flood control districts to guarantee the continuation of commerce on the navigable waters of the Mississippi River and Missouri River Basins and the continued protection of personal property by the levee systems.
  - d) Support a federal law to require the Army Corps of Engineers to place a value on wetlands of at least what was paid for the land when calculating cost-benefit ratios for levee repairs. Values of public services should also be included in the calculation.
  - e) Encourage the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Upper Mississippi River Navigation Study group (Navigation and Eco System Sustainability Program) to fully realize the potential of production technology advancements to increase corn yields as well as potential for future foreign demand.
  - f) Support legislation that holds any environmental restoration projects to the same cost/benefit standards as flood control and navigation projects.
  - g) Encourage vigilant watch on the American Heritage Rivers Initiative policy and other types of initiatives.
  - h) Support management of the Missouri River that places the highest priority on economic uses of the river, i.e., power generation, flood control for agricultural land, navigation and irrigation. Recognize the recreation and environmental value of the river and will work with others to maintain and enhance recreational and environmental benefits.
  - i) Oppose changes in the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers Missouri River Master Manual that have a negative impact on agriculture because of reduced navigation or potential for spring rises.
  - j) Support increased funding for the Corp of Engineers for Streambank Stabilization and Channel Maintenance for the Missouri River.
  - k) All affiliated states will encourage their state legislatures to pass resolutions supporting lock and dam upgrades.
  - l) Support continued funding and operation of the Kaskaskia River Lock.

- m) When flood control plans require the flooding of specific tracts of land to protect economic development in other areas, the landowners of the proposed sacrificial property should receive an annual flood easement payment and compensation for physical and economic damages in the event of actual flooding.
3. Support accurate Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood mapping.
  4. Support the use of FEMA and other federal funding to pay for the repair and replacement of highways, interstate highways, bridges, levees, and other forms of infrastructure damaged by the flooding of the Missouri River in 2011, or similar future events.
  5. Rural Highways
    - a) Encourage state and federal funding for the building and upgrading of rural highways and bridges.
    - b) Encourage and fund heavier weight bearing limits for roads and bridges to accommodate shipping.
    - c) Encourage and support the reauthorization of the Federal Highway Act with the following enhancements: ability to increase gross vehicle weights and additional axle configuration or long vehicle configuration on federally funded primary and secondary roads. Allow the grandfathering in of all state current weights and vehicle combinations.
    - d) Support long term funding for the Federal Highway Trust Fund.
  6. Railroads
    - a) Support the retention and upgrading of the rail transportation system.
    - b) Review all rail and transportation mergers and consolidations.
    - c) Encourage the Surface Transportation Board to focus on shipper/receiver needs.
    - d) Support short line and regional rail projects that improve opportunities for efficient and economical movement of corn and corn products and enhance competition.
    - e) Due to the vast number of unlighted rural rail crossings, rail cars should be required to use highly reflectorized tape in the same manner required for trucks.
    - f) Support competitive and nondiscriminatory rate structure for all our nation's railroads.
    - g) Support establishing state and federal matching loans or grants to upgrade short line rails needed to carry heavier weight.
    - h) Oppose any railroad establishing weight rules detrimental to, or singling out, agriculture. Work with any railroad to investigate and resolve the recent unequal and more expensive weight restrictions placed only upon bulk agricultural commodities.
    - i) Encourage the rail industry to continue the safe transport of anhydrous ammonia.
  7. Propose repeal of the Jones Act, or an exemption for bulk and containerized agricultural commodities and fuels.
  8. Support upgrades for grain export facilities.
  9. Support efforts to improve and expand transportation for the movement of agricultural products by all forms of transportation.
  10. Support dredging of ports to allow fully loaded Super Panamax vessels.
  11. Support expedited environmental review, or grandfathering of the rebuilding of infrastructure, if property is destroyed by disaster.

12. Support up to a 20 cent/gallon increase in the current barge fuel fees to be used for a focused industry supported plan which includes ample benefits to the infrastructure of the Upper Mississippi River Basin.
13. Support anti-trust rail legislation.
14. Support ag production having a right of standing in any rail rate case that may be brought forward.
15. Support reduction in filing fees for rail rate cases and a concrete deadline for ruling on rate cases.
16. Support federal and state policies to upgrade infrastructure used for liquid petroleum and crop nutrients to satisfy seasonal peak needs.
17. Support the investigation and analysis of privatizing the U.S. inland waterway transportation system.
18. Support the investigation of public/private partnerships as a partial or full funding mechanism to upgrade our inland waterway transportation system.

# NCGA Position

Title: Truck Regulations

TBR Dec. 2017/EXP 2018

Position Number: III-A-2

## Resolution/Position:

1. Encourage all states, Canada, and Mexico to establish uniform truck standards for safety, liability and cargo insurance for all vehicles operating for hire. Work to ensure trucks and drivers that pass uniform standards are permitted to move freely across borders.
2. Support continuation of farm exemption of Commercial Drivers License (CDL) requirements. Support elimination of travel restrictions for farmers hauling their own farm commodities and equipment.
3. Oppose the application of transportation regulations relating to drivers of commercial vehicles such as the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations for farmers transporting property for their farming operations.
4. Oppose withholding of federal transportation funds from states that do not impose additional regulatory burdens on farmers.
5. Support agreements allowing farmers hauling their farm products into bordering states to utilize farmer licensing and permitting.
6. Support legislation to exempt farmers with farm license plates on their trucks from being required to obtain a U.S. DOT number and a UCR permit.
8. Seek a permanent hours-of-service federal waiver (spring and fall deliveries) for agricultural inputs to help ensure the timely delivery of agricultural supplies.

# NCGA Position

Title: Rural Development

TBR Dec. 2018/EXP 2019

Position Number: III-B

Background: NCGA encourages the U.S. Congress to initiate programs that will maximize potential opportunities for farmers and their communities. Engaging farmers in value-added processing, production, and marketing is an important strategy for enhancing farm profitability and fostering the development of their rural communities. This implies creating relationships between producers and their customers with shared risk and reward, enabling the producer to receive a larger share of their customer's dollar by investing management, equipment, processing, time, etc. Rural communities stabilize the economy through strong business capitalization and a history of consistent growth.

Resolution/Position:

Supports:

1. Local grower ownership of livestock, corn processing, and grain operations.
2. New sources of capital and lendable funds for start-up and growth businesses.
3. NCGA will actively disseminate information sources on how and where to access debt and equity financing for producer owned/invested opportunities to membership.
4. A secondary market for economic development loans.
5. The Commodity Credit Corporation loan program for farmer investment new construction or expansion of value-added enterprises.
6. Encouraging that the USDA Rural Economic Community Development Funds to be prioritized towards farmer owned value-added systems.
7. An investment tax credit to support farmer owned value-added initiatives.
8. Further development of programs that provide technical assistance, business planning, feasibility studies, market research and development, technology, coordination for farmer owned facilities.
9. Studies which show what corn processing can do for infrastructures and jobs in rural America. These studies should qualify for USDA value-added grant funding.
10. Full funding for USDA Rural Development Value Added Producer Grant Program.
11. Strong involvement by USDA – Rural Development State Offices in the development and scoring of applications of USDA Value-Added grants programs.
12. Strategies whereby farm income can be positively impacted by both a focus on productivity and a focus on opportunity.
13. Implementation of the “rural development component” within the Farm Bill that would help create new corn utilization.
14. Rural development grants language that encourages innovative value added efforts that do not depend on construction of facilities and supports market systems between producers and end users.

15. Amending IRS Code Section 521, the certification criteria for producer cooperatives, to certify cooperatives in which more than 50% of the ownership and control is held by producers.
16. Review and evaluation of co-op law to facilitate development of rural value-added projects.
17. Amending federal law to define a producer owned or controlled business as more than 50% producer-owned or controlled for purposes of producer entities under federal tax, securities, and antitrust laws. Provide exemption for antitrust purposes similar to Capper Volstead exemption but without entity restrictions.
18. Amending IRS Code to allow a cooperative or other producer business entity to convert to a newly eligible business structure without a liquidation tax being imposed if, after the reorganization, a majority of the governance and financial rights are held by producers of agricultural products.
19. Allowing cooperatives and producers entities with proper disclosure to raise money for a capital improvement from patrons and certain qualified investors as certified by the securities division of any state without federal registration. Exempt producer owned or controlled businesses from federal SEC reporting requirements unless securities are traded on a national public exchange.
20. Legislation that would prohibit the taking of property by eminent domain for private economic development.
21. The important work of USDA Rural Development to improve the quality of life and increase economic opportunity in rural America. Encourage the long-term funding of the grant, loan and loan guarantee programs administered by USDA Rural Development.

## IV. Building a solid future for tomorrow's farmers

We support an active research and education commitment by all segments of the corn industry and government.

- A. Research and Commercialization
- B. Structure and the Marketplace
- C. Precision Farming
- D. Communication, Cooperation and Education
- E. Information Programs—Livestock/Poultry



# NCGA Position

Title: Research and Commercialization

TBR Dec. 2018/EXP 2019

Position Number: IV-A

The Research focus at NCGA is to incorporate scientific knowledge ensuring increasing opportunities for corn growers, a profitable corn industry, and a thriving rural economy.

## Resolution/Position:

1. Support maintaining or increasing funding of research at all levels to improve corn quality, lower input costs and increase the use of corn.
2. Support corn genome sequencing and functionality research and pursue action to increase the annual funding for the plant genome initiative with continued leadership through the National Science Foundation (NSF) and other agencies.
3. Support USDA developing an aggressive strategic plan for public research in functional genomics and translational genetics of corn and focus policy and research dollars to that end.
4. Support working with state affiliates, government, university and industry representatives to execute a comprehensive, national corn research and commercialization strategy based on a stage gate model to expand the utilization of corn and corn products.
5. Support the maize trait development program with the goal of developing improved genetic traits in corn for the producer.
6. Support the development and acceptance of scientifically proven biotechnology products in production agriculture and the processing of agricultural products.
7. Germplasm Protection: Urge Congress to fund USDA's National Seed Storage Laboratory to help maintain the genetic diversity of corn and other crop seed stock important to agricultural production.
8. Support research into the use of the value-added products generated by the corn industry for livestock and poultry feeding, aquaculture and other new uses.
9. Support research in biobased renewable corn products.
10. Support forums for state/national research representatives to share/explore current and future research opportunities.
11. Support federal funding of R & D of new and expanded uses of corn and corn products.
12. Strongly support Congressional appropriation of additional funds to support ag research for corn and other crops of economic significance.
13. Support funding for collaborative research efforts between public and private researchers.
14. Support Germplasm Enhancement Maize (GEM) program to increase the genetic diversity and reduce the genetic vulnerability of commercial hybrids.
15. Support corn breeding efforts to develop and maintain unique germplasm.

16. Support efforts to increase the number of corn breeders in the USA.
17. Support the modification of research and intellectual property agreements with research institutions to give checkoff funded organizations the right to jointly set license fees and royalty rates with the institution.
18. NCGA supports use of naturally occurring processes in developing plant/crop improvements for agricultural purposes within appropriate guidelines (e.g. enhanced ploidy, gene editing, RNA interference [RNAi], biologicals, etc.)

# NCGA Position

Title: Structure and the Marketplace

TBR Dec. 2017/EXP 2018

Position Number: IV-B

Background: A competitive agricultural supply industry is essential to a profitable corn industry that allows the American farmer to be the world's most efficient producer. It assures producers, in the long run, of better products and lower input prices. Similarly, competition among merchandisers and/or end users is vital. Without adequate competition, fair compensation to producers fails to exist.

Resolution/Position:

1. Encourage the federal government to help ensure competitive business practices among agricultural suppliers.
2. Support policies which encourage the availability of additional supplies of fertilizer, such as removing import tariffs on fertilizer.
3. Support increased review within the Department of Justice and/or other appropriate agencies to focus on agricultural mergers, acquisitions, vertical integration and price transparency.
4. Encourage manufacturers and suppliers of farm inputs to price their products worldwide in a way that does not put U.S. producers at an unfair disadvantage.
5. Support state warehousing and grain dealer laws. Do not support any federal regulation that would jeopardize state grain indemnity funds and/or state merchandising regulations. Farmers should have adequate notification of any proposed changes in federal warehousing and merchandising regulations before changes are enacted in statute or regulation.
6. In their reporting USDA NASS should accurately reflect the replacement of corn for feed by distiller's grains in the marketplace.
7. Oppose further increases in daily trade limits on all commodity exchanges.
8. Strongly support a rule to have USDA reports released at non-trading periods to ensure that all users of commodity markets have an equal chance to see the information before trading resumes.

# NCGA Position

Title: Precision Farming

TBR Dec. 2017/EXP 2018

Position Number: IV-C

## Resolution/Position:

1. Information gathered by precision farming practices should remain the sole property of the farm operator excluding any other contractual arrangement. This information should not be used, released, or sold without their consent.
2. We believe that data collected from farming and agricultural operations is valuable, should remain the property of the individual, and warrants protection. We will:
  - a) Support efforts to better educate stakeholders regarding utilizing new technology or equipment that may receive, record, and/or transmit their data.
  - b) Support requiring companies that are collecting, storing, and analyzing the data to provide full disclosure of their intended use of the data.
  - c) Seek formation of and be an active participant in industry discussions regarding development of industry wide protocols including, but not limited to, proper disclosure, privacy, and use agreement.
  - d) Encourage participants in data sharing use agreements to recognize the value associated with the data; allowing farmers to receive fair compensation.
3. Encourage designers of precision farming equipment to use communication standards to make their products compatible with other brands of software and hardware.
4. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) should maintain the integrity of the entire MSS BAND spectrum for GPS use.
5. Support individual and commercial access to Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) technology as a tool for farmers to manage their farm operation for production and research. Any access should be with the agreement of the landowner and/or farm tenants.

# NCGA Position

Title: Communication, Cooperation and Education    TBR Dec. 2017/EXP 2018    Position Number: IV-D

Background: U.S. corn growers will positively position the value of corn and corn production. Communications addressing our issues are more credible when presented by farmers.

## Resolution/Position:

1.     Accountability
  - a)   Emphasize the value of NCGA membership.
  - b)   Emphasize recruitment and retention of a more diverse set of NCGA members and leaders.
  - c)   Communicate how checkoff and membership dollars are invested to benefit all corn producers.
  - d)   Encourage members to participate in the development and evaluation of NCGA programs.
  
2.     Political Involvement
  - a)   Encourage individual corn producers to be more politically active.
  - b)   Promote the Corn Political Action Committee.
  
3.     Education
  - a)   Encourage cooperation of agricultural groups for the development of academic standard based agricultural classroom materials and review of educational materials for agricultural accuracy.
  - b)   Support the continued education of farmers on current and emerging issues.
  - c)   Support the coordination of education programs, such as Extension, FFA and 4-H.
  - d)   Support youth being allowed to participate in agriculture related work.
  - e)   Encourage young people to study and work in agriculture and related food, fiber and energy fields.
  - f)   Encourage the use of technology and social media in educational efforts to bring an agricultural perspective to the classroom.
  - g)   Promote continuing education efforts for teachers related to agriculture and food, fiber and energy issues.
  - h)   Encourage incorporation of agriculture into general science curricula.
  
4.     Farmer Image
  - a)   Strengthen outreach with consumers regarding the corn that farmers grow, the methods used to grow it, the products it is used in, and the value it brings to consumers.
  - b)   Encourage and work with agribusiness companies and organizations to improve and promote the positive image of production agriculture by:
    - i)   Being more selective of advertising markets.
    - ii)  Using advertisements that portray agriculture as a modern, efficient, and environmentally responsible "Family Farm" business.
    - iii) Focusing more on the environmental concern and stewardship of producers and their ability to produce for a global market.
    - iv)  Taking steps to directly engage modern consumers who want to know what is in their food, where it comes from, and how it is grown.
  
5.     Communication Infrastructure
  - a)   Support efforts to provide high-speed data, voice and video technologies to corn growers.
  - b)   Encourage competition to provide increased access and affordable service.
  
6.     Corn Checkoffs
  - a)   Support state checkoffs on all marketable corn, to expand and enhance the use, marketing and efficient production of corn.
  - b)   Specialty corn grown under contract should be subject to state corn checkoff assessment programs.

- c) End-users should be prohibited from administering a corn checkoff.
- d) Only state recognized, corn farmer-led organizations should be eligible to collect and administer a state corn checkoff.
- e) Only one corn checkoff per state should be recognized.

7. Coalitions:

- a) Work with farm organizations and coalitions, checkoff boards and commodity groups in the interest of U.S. corn farmers.
- b) Encourage the creation of and participation with coalitions with non-traditional partners in the interest of U.S. corn farmers.
- c) We support corn growers' involvement in the MAIZALL coalition.

# NCGA Position

Title: Information Programs-Livestock/Poultry TBR Dec. 2017/EXP 2018

Position Number: IV-E

## Resolution/Position:

1. In conjunction with member states, implement a comprehensive program to educate potential users of corn and its co-products as a livestock/poultry feed.
2. Farm Animal Welfare
  - a) Assure the public, through education, that American animal agriculture is humane.
  - b) Support responsible livestock/poultry production and oppose restrictive legislation. Recognize the importance of proper animal care, rather than animal rights.
  - c) Support educational efforts that enhance consumer understanding of the economic value of responsible livestock/poultry producers to rural communities.
  - d) Recognize the Pork Quality Assurance (PQA), Beef Quality Assurance (BQA), Dairy Quality Assurance (DQA), and NCC Animal Welfare Guidelines and Audit Checklist by the National Chicken Council as programs that will "Maximize consumer confidence in, and acceptance of, pork, beef and poultry by focusing the producers attention to DAILY PRODUCTION PRACTICES that influence the safety, wholesomeness, and quality of pork, beef and poultry products through the use of science, research, and education initiatives."
  - e) Support the Humane Slaughter Act as regulated by the USDA and the Meat Packing Industry.
  - f) Changes to animal well-being guidelines should be based on sound data, expert analysis and economic feasibility.
  - g) Encourage National Corn Growers Association and State corn organizations to work with their livestock organizations to develop Animal Welfare Coalitions.
3. Urge the Federal and state governments, when determining siting requirements for CAFOs, to establish reverse separation distances between CAFOs, homes and businesses.
4. Engage with member states to defeat the efforts of radical animal rights groups such as the Humane Society of the United States and others which seek to end modern agriculture production in the United States.
5. We want USDA to be prepared for a major animal health outbreak and how they handle it. Producers need to help provide guidance to the government on faster response, disposal, and biosecurity protocol.

## V. Leaving our world in better shape than we found it

Farming using Best Management Practices (BMP) will improve the environment.

- A) Environmental Policy
- B) Water Quality
- C) Crop Protection Use Policy
- D) Conservation Programs



# NCGA Position

Title: Domestic Environmental Policy

TBR Dec. 2017/EXP 2018

Position Number: V-A-1

Background: Corn growers are very concerned with the health and well-being of American citizens. We are mindful of the need to balance environmental stewardship with a dependable food and energy supply and necessity for long-term profitability. We support interaction with any organization that shares our concern for the environment.

## Resolution/Position:

1. Support a domestic environmental policy based on sound science using a cost-benefit analysis, and fund needed research allowing our advocates to challenge new USEPA regulations.
2. Actively work on reform of the Endangered Species Act to address economic impact by using a cost-benefit analysis.
3. Create a plan of action to modify existing federal rules within the Endangered Species Act (ESA), Clean Water Act (CWA), Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) and others that severely increase costs to growers or provide a regulatory environment that negatively impacts production agriculture and especially corn production. Implement the plan as soon as practical.
4. If any public environmental demands or regulations are placed on private land, the loss of income, loss of property value including the cost of capital improvements to make those changes should be paid by the public.
5. Water Flows
  - a) Urge federal government agencies to fully consider impacts of regulating water flows on agriculture.
  - b) Urge all federal, state and local governmental agencies to expeditiously repair water retention and protection structures damaged by flooding to protect all cropland producers who wish to keep their land in production.
  - c) Support individuals' water rights.
6. While noting the importance of eminent domain for the orderly growth of our country and the expansion of our land transportation system, oppose any government action that would infringe upon property owner's rights without appeal and proper compensation. Also recognize the importance of conserving agricultural land for future generations and oppose the unnecessary use of Eminent Domain to convert agricultural lands to other uses.
7. Natural Resource Policy. Encourage a system that incorporates local farmer input as a model for dealing with farm-related environmental issues and regulations.
  - a) Encourage the development of local resource planning groups composed of agricultural landowners and producers to address local conservation and environmental issues.
  - b) Encourage the utilization of organizations and government agencies as technical advisers to the local resource planning group.
  - c) Producer Notification: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) shall issue timely notification of regulatory changes to allow individual producers adequate lead time to adjust agricultural production practices.
8. Conservation/Tax Policy

- a) Oppose taxes on crop inputs as an effort to reduce their usage.
  - b) Recommend legislation be enacted to allow farmers and landowners income tax credits for approved conservation structures and practices.
  - c) Support a change in the U.S. tax code to allow tax deductibility for permanent conservation practices to land owners who cash rent their land.
9. Support farmland protection and smart growth partnerships that would provide funding, in matching grants to states, communities, tribes and land trusts, for the purchase of development rights with the underlying fee running with the land to be used on farmland threatened by development. This program should be administered by USDA.
  10. Support state corn grower association efforts to secure federal funding for:
    - a) State water quality efforts.
    - b) Coordinated multi-state water quality efforts.
  11. Amend the PM10 regulations to restore an agricultural exemption.
  12. Require that any new environmental regulations show a positive cost and risk benefit analysis before implementation.
  13. Agricultural environmental standards should not be more strict than industry and municipal standards.
  14. Support research efforts to address nutrient management.
    - a) Support research to identify effective management practices and conservation structures.
    - b) Support research and watershed programs to identify how agricultural practices can minimize nutrient movement off-site.
    - c) Oppose regulations that do not account for nutrient movement and amounts caused by natural processes.
    - d) Agricultural environmental standards should only address nutrient issues that agriculture can control as part of normal agricultural practices.
    - e) Support implementation of nutrient strategies that are economically viable for producers.
  15. Considering the wide margin of error when using satellite imagery to illustrate cropping patterns, oppose the use of said images in legislative and/or regulatory processes when not verified by on-the-ground data.
  16. All scientific data and models generated by government agencies should be subject to ground truthing and a credible peer review process and verification of input data.
  17. Support legislation that prevents EPA from regulating greenhouse gas emissions.
  18. Support water management through irrigation and tile drainage.
  19. Work to oppose federal agencies actively soliciting agricultural land for purchase in a flood plain and during a flooding event.
  20. Support legislation that allows land and easements purchased for mitigation projects in specific areas or regions (i.e. watersheds, Loess Hills) be allowed to cross comply for other state and federal mitigation projects in that same area or region to help minimize impacts to private land ownership and counties and states tax revenue.

21. Support the plant protection industry in their proactive efforts to determine the cause of colony collapse disorder in honey bees.
22. Oppose all new National Heritage Areas unless they meet the following criteria:
  1. Any Heritage sites should be predestinated to a particular building or site and would not affect private property rights without the consent of such owner
  2. Any funds should be for specific sites and should not have strings attached
  3. No zoning changes will be proposed by the managing entity
  4. All controls remain local under the control of elected county commissioners
  5. Any historical site cannot place restrictions on any adjoining properties
  6. No restrictions may be placed on future business opportunities on adjoining lands
  7. No federal control or legal authority on any site or surrounding properties
  8. No special taxes can be subjected on citizens within the Heritage site
  9. Any Heritage area should consume the minimum amount of property.
23. Support Field to Market as the preferred system to document the sustainability of corn production and provide growers with tools to evaluate and document the sustainability of their production practices.

# NCGA Position

Title: Global Climate Change

TBR Dec. 2018/EXP 2019

Position Number: V-A-2

## Resolution/Position:

1. Fully explore through policy research the impacts of climate legislation on agriculture and biofuels.
2. In the event climate legislation is introduced, the agriculture sector must not be capped and must be afforded an opportunity to contribute via the market for offsets. Artificial caps will prevent legitimate carbon sequestration, livestock methane capture, and manure gasification projects from occurring.
3. Support the designation of qualified offsets that will be acceptable in a cap and trade program. Qualified offsets must be real, additional, verified, registered, fungible, and permanent (or of contracted duration).
4. Ensure that carbon cap and trade legislation addressing climate change issues incorporate the following conditions:
  - a) Energy costs to business, industry and consumers must remain affordable for our economy to compete in the global marketplace
  - b) Growers of crops must be able to derive sufficient economic benefits from a voluntary enrollment sequestration environment to adequately incentivize their participation and to materially offset the increases in production costs arising from a cap and trade program.
  - c) To mitigate negative impacts of cap and trade program on corn farmers, allowances for fertilizer manufacturers must be strong and permanent.
5. In the event climate legislation is introduced the agriculture sector should be fully rewarded for all verifiable GHG emission reductions. Any climate legislation passed should not restrict private property rights nor penalize or impede producers from utilizing the best and most efficient farming practices for their operation.
6. Support federal funding for thorough life-cycle analysis of corn production and the end uses of corn, including livestock and corn-to-ethanol technology.
7. The cap and trade system design should reward early actors in uncapped sectors for incremental reductions after a specified date. The cap and trade system design must identify and guard against potential perverse outcomes such as the temporary cessation of a practice in order to restart the same practice as a qualified additional project earning offsets.
8. 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.
9. Support USDA as the administrator of any greenhouse gas or carbon based cap and trade program as the developing agency with respect to the agricultural offset project rules.
10. 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.

11. If carbon or cap and trade legislation or regulations are proposed, review the scientific merit and economic impacts of such proposals. Oppose a climate change bill if it does not support long-term corn grower opportunity for profitability.

# NCGA Position

Title: Water Quality

TBR Dec. 2017/EXP 2018

Position Number: V-B

Background: The quality of water is a critical national issue, and the efficient use of nutrients is essential for profitable crop production.

## Resolution/Position:

1. Urge the appropriate federal and state agencies to work with universities, commodity groups and general farm organizations to:
  - a) Urge the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to use scientifically sound health-based maximum contaminant levels (MCL) when establishing the rules for restricted use crop protection products and nutrients. State governments should use the federal standards for evaluating any need for remedial action.
  - b) Determine the methods and quantities by which contaminants enter water.
  - c) Research effects of such contaminants on human health and environment.
  - d) Acknowledge that the best way for producers to do their part in protecting the quality of our water resources is through the recommended use and safe handling of fertilizers and crop protection products. Develop and prove best management practices to protect water quality and educate farmers in their implementation.
  - e) Make the goal of maintaining and achieving quality water the mutual responsibility of all rural, urban and industrial users of water.
  - f) Acknowledge the importance of responsible nutrient use in profitable crop production.
  - g) Use state land grant university developed nutrient management recommendations for their programs.
2. Support continued funding for federal non-point source pollution programs authorized by the Clean Water Act.
3. Federal jurisdiction over navigable waters of the United States under the Clean Water Act should not be expanded in scope.
4. Agricultural contributions to hypoxia should be determined based on sound scientific facts. We support independent peer review of findings to determine the causes of hypoxia.
5. Support the right of farmers to voluntarily develop a plan of action to address the agricultural non-point source portion of the plan developed by the interagency task force addressing hypoxia. The plan's goals and objectives can best be administered at the local level through soil and water conservation organizations and farm groups. Further, we support voluntary non-point source programs to assist farmers in achieving water quality goals.
6. Support research on the impact of site specific application technology on the environment and agriculture.
7. Encourage any guidelines for watershed nutrient management to be constructed through watershed and statewide stakeholder input.
  - State Departments of Agriculture should manage nutrient application issues.
  - Continue promoting programs to educate producers on the benefits and need for voluntary Best Management Practices.

8. All Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) implementation plans for watershed protection programs should remain voluntary, be incentive based, and provide for farmer input into the decision-making process concerning TMDL assessment and monitoring.
9. Manure applied on cropland at agronomic rates using Best Management Practices should not be considered point source pollution under the provisions of the Clean Water Act.
10. Water quality cost share assistance programs, such as EQIP, should be made available to livestock/poultry facilities without bias to size or location.
11. Identify water quality, equity and usage- issues that affect corn producers, ultimately leading to future water policies.
12. Support the concept of science-based surface and groundwater monitoring on a local, watershed basis to provide a baseline set of data and to help determine the extent and sources of water quality impairment. Historical monitoring data should be considered when setting nutrient standards for surface water.
13. Encourage EPA to adopt science-based water quality standards that are reasonably attainable for the TMDL process.
14. Encourage farmer involvement and participation in watershed planning committees and state technical committees.
15. Support the use of EQIP funds and other cost share funding to meet any governmental requirements for storage of fuel, fertilizer or crop protection products.
16. Recognize the importance of protecting water bodies such as the Chesapeake Bay and the Gulf of Mexico from nutrient and sediment loading. Support voluntary measures, including Farm Bill conservation programs to achieve desired environmental goals but opposes EPA efforts to impose mandatory and enforceable requirements for non-point sources of pollution from agricultural lands. Furthermore, support the collection of data from ongoing voluntary conservation practices-to ensure that state and federal agencies have a more accurate accounting of water quality impacts from agriculture.
17. Lead the development of a Best Management Practices (BMP) database cataloging the past and current research on existing BMP's for agriculture (similar to the current storm water BMP database).
18. Participate in water quality research to create a baseline for nitrogen and phosphorus on tilled land.

# NCGA Position

Title: Crop Protection Use Policy

TBR Dec. 2017/EXP 2018

Position Number: V-C

Background: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) should recognize the importance of crop protection products as effective and economical corn production tools, and should recognize that, over the past few years, manufacturers of these products and corn growers have voluntarily initiated and adopted changes in use rates, application practices and additional best management practices (BMP) that have resulted in significant decreases in total volumes applied and significant increases in soil and water protection measures. We urge EPA to objectively evaluate the risks and benefits of these crop protection products using the best available science.

## Resolution/Position:

1. Farmers should not be held liable if they use products according to label directions and generally accepted agronomic practices.
2. Support efforts to increase the testing, research and adoption of science-based, environmentally safe methods and products for the control of pests and diseases. Encourage the use of these methods by agriculture.
3. Mandatory record keeping of crop protection products should be limited to restricted-use crop protection products. Confidentiality of the individual's records should be maintained.
4. Support the Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) to take precedence over local crop protection product regulation.
5. Oppose efforts by EPA to require implementation of pesticide management plans.
6. In its review of the registration of the triazines, EPA should recognize the importance of these products as effective and economical corn production tools that work well with conservation tillage.
7. Oppose the arbitrary non-scientific-based review of crop protection products by EPA or any other governmental agency.
8. Encourage and support the labeling of all crop protection product containers to clearly state the trade names and the amount of each chemical in a premix product, as well as the disclosure of this information in print advertising and promotional materials.
9. Require a cost risk/benefit analysis for the registration and re-registration of crop protection products.
10. When addressing risks of crop protection product residues in food, the most scientifically reliable estimates of risk and exposure should be used.
11. Oppose EPA efforts to implement zero tolerance or unrealistic spray drift policies or otherwise attempt to implement drift policy on a case by case basis.
12. With the passage of the FQPA, recommend that the EPA move expeditiously to:
  - a) Make decisions based on sound science instead of based on default assumptions.
  - b) Register new crop protection products.



- c) Release regulations and workable tolerances for products that have completed data.
13. Support streamlining the interagency consultation process for pesticide registrations under FIFRA and the ESA.
  14. Oppose Inherently Safer Technologies (IST) provisions in federal chemical site security legislation because it would require chemical facilities to assess the viability of switching to “safer” chemical alternatives without considering agronomic necessity and could jeopardize the availability of widely used, lower cost sources of essential plant nutrient products used by farmers.
  15. Support repeal of the requirement for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for pesticide applications as mandated by the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals.
  16. Oppose federal agencies prohibiting or restricting beyond their approved labeled use any federally approved GMO, seed technology, or crop protection chemical on any federally owned or managed land when such land is in agricultural production. The contractual language within agreements between federal agencies and farmers/growers on agricultural land shall follow proven science and shall provide growers access/use of standard industry practices.

# NCGA Position

Title: Conservation Program

TBR Dec. 2018/EXP 2019

Position Number: V-D-1

## Resolution/Position:

1. Encourage USDA to fund conservation cost-share programs with local farmer-elected committee oversight.
2. Encourage the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to provide technical and financial assistance and educational resource planning programs to agricultural producers to help them meet society's expectations for clean water, clean air and healthy land.
  - a) Encourage Congress and USDA to ensure that adequate technical assistance is available to agricultural producers to help them address conservation challenges.
  - b) Encourage Congress and USDA to look at a long-term view of budgeting for technical assistance that balances national priorities with local needs.
  - c) Encourage USDA to explore the use of multi-year agreements when arranging Technical Service Providers (TSPs) to address year-to-year fluctuation of financial assistance.
3. Encourage state affiliates and individual growers to participate in state technical committees.
4. Support compensating producers who already utilize conservation practices in the event that a portion of future program payments are based on switching to such conservation practices.
5. Support matching federal funds to state and local governments for research and education to adapt conservation practices to a modern agriculture.
6. Oppose the public use of private lands enrolled in conservation programs without owners permission.
7. Funds should be made available for agricultural uses from Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) on a cost-share basis for environmental conservation practices.
8. Support voluntary programs that create environmental incentive payments for implementation of conservation practices.
9. Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) contracts should be administered as the contract was written with original intent maintained.
10. Conservation Compliance
  - a) Support conservation compliance.
  - b) Encourage conservation plans to incorporate sound acceptable cultural practices for the area and provide for the economic capability of the producer to implement the plan according to a defined timetable.
  - c) The best way to implement USDA conservation compliance is through a Title I program.
  - d) Recommend that the USDA allocate the necessary resources to adequately and fairly implement the conservation compliance requirements of current and future farm acts, including continued research to update the universal soil loss equation.
  - e) Penalties assessed to commodity program participants, under the conservation provisions of the Farm Bill, should only be the amount of the payments received on the tract found to be out of compliance.

11. NCGA priorities in developing conservation compliance guidelines are:
  - a) A violation only affects the premium subsidy from the government, not eligibility for crop insurance;
  - b) Enforcement only occurs after all rights to appeal are finalized;
  - c) A grace period is given to come back into compliance, and when back into compliance, the farmer is eligible for full crop insurance policy;
  - d) Enforcement is not applied retroactively to prior crop years (example: claw back provision proposed by Congress to require repaying government premiums for prior crop years);
  - e) The Natural Resources Conservation Service/Farm Service Agency continues to handle both spot checks and appeals, not the Risk Management Agency or other government agency;
  - f) The penalty is only applicable to the farm with the violation on it, not a farmer's total acres.
  - g) We should pursue an "act of God" variance for extreme weather effects affecting compliance regulations.
12. Support funding conservation incentives from sources other than the commodity title.
13. Support a conservation program available for all corn growers that rewards them for best management practices used in their operations.
14. Support the practice of conservation cover as a conservation tool that should not be considered primary crops by the FSA. This should be emphasized in the future Farm Bill.
15. Support efforts to provide more clarity and more flexibility in the interpretation of cover crop rules/regulations by the Risk Management Agency.
16. Support haying and grazing as a part of the multiple uses USDA-funded conservation programs.

# NCGA Position

Title: Swampbuster and Sodbuster Programs

TBR Dec. 2018/EXP 2019

Position Number: V-D-2

## Resolution/Position:

1. The Swampbuster provision should not apply to lands cropped or considered cropped during any one year of the 1981-1985 period. Federal program benefits should be denied only to those lands broken after the enactment of the legislation.
2. When a wetlands violation occurs, FSA should be limited to retroactively withholding payment for a maximum of five years. County and state FSA committees shall have the authority to negotiate reasonable penalties.
3. Swampbuster and sodbuster provisions should have clear and concise definitions, with the National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) being the sole regulatory agency.
4. Support a simplified, timely and equitable dispute resolution process.
5. Support the rights of farmers and drainage districts to repair, upgrade, and maintain all public and private drainage systems, including if bordering or within CRP ground.
6. Support the rights of farmers and drainage districts to drain, improve or maintain any land that has been changed by wind, floods or any forces beyond the farmer's control.
7. Support wetland policies where new wetlands be only from voluntary sources, be specifically targeted (not whole farms) and not result in a loss of fertile cropland suitable for farming.
8. Proper compensation should be provided to property owners, drainage districts and other units of local government if delineation of a parcel of land as a wetland results in an economic loss.
9. Support mitigation banking for agricultural wetland conversions utilizing a values and functional use criteria which is reasonable and reciprocal.
10. Delineation of agricultural wetlands should be made by soil and water district boards, with state NRCS offices providing standard interpretation of wetland guidelines.
11. Support a paid wetlands reserve program.
12. A minimal effects system should be developed and implemented that would permit acreage with little or no wetland value to be exempt from regulation under Section 404 and Swampbuster.
13. To be classified as a wetland, a parcel of land must exhibit during the growing season (to be defined as historical average of frost-free days in the geographic area) all three of the following criteria:
  - a) Hydric soils.
  - b) Hydrophytic vegetation.
  - c) Saturation to the soil surface for 21 days or standing water for 15 days following normal rainfall.
14. Maps used for wetland determinations must accurately reflect the above criteria. Farmers should have the right to local on-site determinations, if they wish.

15. Oppose wetlands determinations based on the 15 days standing water criteria that resulted from failure of internal drainage due to high river stages.
16. All land farmed and/or where conversion was commenced or was within a drainage district prior to December 23, 1985, should be considered prior converted and exempted from further regulation.
17. Appropriate agencies should conduct educational programs to encourage the voluntary conservation of wetlands.
18. Wetlands guidelines should allow the benefits of agricultural conversion to be considered in the Section 404 permitting process and the determination of farm program eligibility.
19. State wetland regulations should be no more restrictive than comparable federal guidelines.
20. The scope of wetlands regulation should be limited to wetland areas of 5 acres or larger.
21. Sunsetting of wetland determinations and certifications should be discontinued.
22. All regions of the country should use the same wetland hydrology criteria with no exception areas such as prairie potholes and playa lake regions.
23. Support all federal regulatory agencies claiming jurisdiction over wetlands being required to identify and coordinate their areas of jurisdiction and to submit proposed rules to public comments to avoid abuse of authority and to prevent overlapping regulations at any specific site.
24. Support streamlining the process of modernizing drainage districts especially in the area of wetland and farmed wetland mitigation.

# NCGA Position

Title: Conservation Reserve Program

TBR Dec. 2018/EXP 2019

Position Number: V-D-3

## Resolution/Position:

1. Support enrollment into and renewal of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) contracts targeted to the most environmentally sensitive land, such as:
  - a) Field borders, large waterways, filter and buffer strips and other areas needed for conservation compliance. If areas above are included, then grazing would be allowed during non-growing seasons. These targeted areas should be allowed to be managed in such a manner that would not disrupt the normal management of the entire field.
  - b) Other land that Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) designates as environmentally sensitive lands.
  - c) Encourage USDA to enroll partial fields with the intent of targeting the most environmentally sensitive areas.
2. Oppose permanent easements.
3. USDA to ensure that payments for whole field enrollments are 30% less than the county average rental rates for similar land capability classes.
4. CRP rental rates should be adjusted to keep environmental and/or significant wildlife habitat sensitive lands in the CRP program.
  - a) Review and update land rental rates as needed
  - b) Pro-rate land rental rates based on sensitivity
5. Support conservation cost-share work to be done after the 8<sup>th</sup> year of a 10-year CRP Contract without forfeiture of CRP payments.
6. Promote and support the voluntary enrollment under the continuous enrollment provision of CRP including:
  - a) wildlife habitat/food plot areas
  - b) filter and buffer strips
  - c) established waterways and turn rows
  - d) other partial field enrollments impacting water quality
7. Support the rights of farmers to bring land back into production at the end of their CRP contract. Encourage utilization of sound conservation practices as land is returned to production.
8. Support allowing mechanically harvested hay crops as an acceptable rotation crop for CRP eligibility.
9. Support the fall harvesting of biomass on a percentage of CRP acres if a market for biomass is available. In the event such a harvest takes place, CRP program payments on those harvested acres will be forfeited for that year; but there will be no other penalties and the contract will remain intact.
10. Support shifting any government savings from early release of CRP acres to further enhance conservation efforts on working lands.

11. Support the establishment of an E-CRP (Energy and Conservation Reserve Program). This program would mimic and expand the BCAP (Biomass Crop Assistance Program) established under the 2008 farm bill, which makes farmers within qualified areas eligible to receive assistance to cover the cost of establishing and bringing to production, perennial biomass crops. While most perennial biomass crops can serve as filter strips and wildlife cover, under E-CRP these crops will be primarily managed for biomass production.
12. Methodology of breaking contracts should be changed to focus on the farmer and/or landlord being required to pay off the remaining years of contract and reimburse establishment costs provided for by USDA.
13. Support and encourage a greater diversity of options for NRCS CP33 borders and other CRP cover species mixtures that includes considerations of regional diversity of species options.