

# Engaging in the Climate Discussion

## Key Takeaways

- The Biden administration is taking a whole of government approach to climate.
- The private sector has set goals and initiatives focused on the environment and climate.
- Farm Bureau has worked to ensure farmers' voices are heard in the discussions surrounding climate.

## Background

Following the 2020 election cycle, the political climate changed in Washington D.C. with the election of President Joe Biden and his party holding slim majorities in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. From the campaign trail to his first months in office, President Biden has made a significant focus on climate change. **One of his first actions as president was to issue the Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad.** This executive order stated:

*The United States and the world face a profound climate crisis. We have a narrow moment to pursue action at home and abroad in order to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of that crisis and to seize the opportunity that tackling climate change presents. Domestic action must go hand in hand with United States international leadership, aimed at significantly enhancing global action. Together, we must listen to science and meet the moment.*

**This executive order required focus from the entire executive branch of the federal government to be cognizant of the climate.** First, the order prioritized climate considerations and explained they shall be an essential element of United States foreign policy and national security. Second, the order set the policy for agencies to organize and deploy their full capacity to combat the climate crisis to implement a government-wide approach reducing climate pollution in every sector of the economy; increases resilience to the impacts of climate change; protects public health; conserves land, water, and biodiversity; delivers environmental justice; and spurs well-paying union jobs and economic growth, especially through innovation, commercialization, and deployment of clean energy technologies and infrastructure.

**The climate discussion is not only happening with government, but also in the private sector.** Many of the major companies in the food and fiber supply chain have set environmental, sustainability, and climate goals including Walmart, Tyson, Bayer, ADM, McDonald's, Amazon, plus numerous more. It is apparent these entities believe the free market and the consumer is demanding this type of action.

*"That is why Farm Bureau is at the table sharing agriculture's story and helping shape policy that will promote market-based, voluntary sustainability practices."*  
Zippy Duvall, American Farm Bureau Federation President

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With both the government and private sectors moving to take action on the climate, it is imperative for farmers to engage in the discussion.

**Farm Bureau has worked to ensure farmers' voices are heard in government discussions surrounding climate.** The key directives from Farm Bureau policy are farmers want voluntary, incentive, and science-based approaches. In the fall of 2019, the American Farm Bureau Federation joined the Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance (FACA). This group is made up of entities which represent farmers, forest owners, the food sector, state governments, and environmental advocates. FACA's focus is federal policy can and should provide incentives and support for farmers and forest owners as they tackle the challenges created by the climate. FACA's policy recommendations cover six areas of focus: soil health, livestock and dairy, forests and wood products, energy, research, and food loss and waste.

**Farm Bureau is engaging in the private sector's discussions surrounding climate.** American Farm Bureau is a member of the Farmers for Sustainable Future (FSF). FSF is made up of many agriculture organizations and represents U.S. farmers committed to sustainably producing the world's food, feed and fiber supply. FSF's focus is to generate an outcome creating market-based solutions, led by farmers, improving rural communities while recognizing the diversity of agricultural practices, climates, challenges, and resource needs.

**With both the government and private sectors moving to take action on the climate, it is imperative for farmers to engage in the discussion.** This following series of Policy Development papers is aimed to provide insight to Farm Bureau leadership on the ongoing climate discussions. What makes Farm Bureau so successful is its grassroots structure in which farmers are informed on a topic, engage in conversation with other farmers, come to a consensus, place the consensus in Farm Bureau policy, and then advocate for the policy.