POLICY DEVELOPMENT

2025

2025 Policy Development

Dear Grassroots Leader,

Thank you for joining us for another year of great conversation as we work to develop our guiding policies and resolutions. Over the last year we have celebrated great accomplishments for the agriculture industry, including passing the second step of a multi-year effort to amend the State Constitution to prohibit the collection of a statewide property tax - sending it to the November 2026 ballot, establishing a statewide voluntary farmland preservation program, as well as securing nearly $140 million dollars worth of state investments for the agriculture industry. On the federal level, there has been $66 billion dollars invested in farm programs and significant tax savings secured already in 2025. None of these efforts would be possible without the help and leadership of our membership across the Volunteer State.

The rear interior cover references prior Policy Development Papers. We encourage you to take a look and read more about the policies discussed at meetings held in previous years. Tennessee agriculture continues to move forward on the local, state, and federal level and this would not be the case without your passionate support.

The grassroots engagement process doesn't end with these meetings, even when it's not an election year. We encourage you to stay informed on upcoming dates and deadlines for 2026 in order to be an informed and regular voter. For more information on elections, visit ifarmivote.com or see the rear cover.

If our division can ever be of assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out. We look forward to the year to come!

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Farm Bureau Tennessee
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Updated as of July 15, 2025

Pesticides, Failure to Warn Lawsuits, and State Legislation

Key Takeaways:

- In recent years there have been lawsuits against pesticide manufacturers which claimed the company failed to warn about the risks of using the product.
- Manufacturers are required by federal law to use the label provided by the EPA.
- State and federal legislation has been filed to provide clarity to whether pesticide manufacturers are liable for claims on failure to warn which follow the federal label requirements.
- Federal Circuit Courts of Appeal have split decisions about whether the federal law preempts failure to warn claims on pesticides following federal label requirements, and the U.S. Supreme Court is in the process of determining whether the court will hear the issue.
- There is concern that if this type of litigation continues to be successful, manufacturers will stop producing these products which are vital to farmers. Bayer has publicly stated that without resolution to this issue, the company will be compelled to remove glyphosate from the market.

Questions:

1. Should companies be held liable for failure to warn claims even though federal law prohibits making changes to the federally approved label?
2. Tennessee Farm Bureau policy supports state legislation to address these types of lawsuits, do your farmers in your community support this position?
3. Would losing access to pesticide products impede profitability for farmers?

Background

Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation would like to thank the National Agricultural Law Center for the information in this article.

Over the past several years there has been an increase in lawsuits filed claiming that exposure to a pesticide product caused the development of illness or injury. The highest profile pesticide injury cases have involved plaintiffs who claim that exposure to glyphosate, the active ingredient in the pesticide Roundup, has caused non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. There have also been cases alleging injury as the result of exposure to paraquat, chlorpyrifos, and other commonly used pesticide products. Typically, the lawsuits claim pesticide manufacturers failed to warn consumers

For more National Ag Law Center resources, scan here:

about health risks allegedly associated with exposure to certain pesticide products and have become central to pesticide injury litigation.

“Failure to warn” is a type of civil tort frequently raised in products liability cases. Unlike negligence and design defect, which are other legal claims, failure to warn does not argue a product has physical faults. Instead, a plaintiff typically raises failure to warn claims to allege a product manufacturer failed to provide adequate warnings or instructions about the safe use of a product. The high-profile pesticide cases hinge on the failure to warn concept. To succeed on a failure to warn claim, a plaintiff must prove two things. First, the plaintiff must show the manufacturer did not adequately warn consumers about a particular risk. Second, the plaintiff must show the risk was either known or knowable considering the generally recognized and prevailing best scientific and medical knowledge available at the time the product was manufactured and distributed. Essentially, the manufacturer must have either known or been able to easily discover the risk, failed to warn consumers, and such failure caused the plaintiff to become injured.

Pesticide manufacturers argued failure to warn claims by stating that pesticides are regulated under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), a federal law which requires all pesticides to bear a federally approved label to be sold legally in the United States. Part of registering a pesticide product label requires the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to conduct a human health risk assessment and make a carcinogenicity classification. Additionally, FIFRA prohibits states from adding language to a federally registered pesticide label which is “in addition to or different from” federal requirements. Pesticide manufacturers argue failure to warn claims in pesticide injury lawsuits should be dismissed because the only way to avoid the claims would be for the manufacturer to affix cancer warning statements to the packaging in addition to the federal label. Manufacturers have argued this would violate FIFRA by introducing label language different from the federally approved label. Specifically, EPA has never concluded that glyphosate is carcinogenic in humans, which is what most of the lawsuits claim.

Lawsuits filed by plaintiffs have been on the rise for years claiming they were injured after being exposed to glyphosate and Bayer (formerly Monsanto) failed to warn them of risks, with the question of whether FIFRA preempts the tort claims raised by plaintiffs having come before three Circuit Courts of Appeal. Currently, there is a split amongst the circuits, with the Ninth and Eleventh Circuits finding these claims are not preempted by federal law and the Third Circuit holding that FIFRA does preempt the claims. The Supreme Court has been asked to consider whether the FIFRA preempts state tort law and claims pesticide manufacturers have “failed to warn” consumers about alleged health risks associated with using their products. In June 2025, the Supreme Court asked the Office of the Solicitor General to give input on whether the Court should hear the case on the scope of federal pesticide law. The Supreme Court will decide by the end of the year if it will take up the case.

While courts continue to consider whether failure to warn claims should be permitted in pesticide injury lawsuits, some states are looking to pass legislation limiting the liability of pesticide manufacturers facing failure to warn lawsuits over pesticide products bearing federally approved labels consistent with the most recent human health risk evaluations and carcinogenicity classifications from EPA. North Dakota and Georgia have passed this type of legislation. In 2025, Tennessee Farm Bureau supported similar legislation which passed the Senate but was delayed in the House Judiciary Committee until 2026. As amended, the legislation created a defense in Tennessee law for failure to warn claims for following the federal label.

Congressional legislation has also been filed. The Agricultural Labeling Uniformity Act seeks to provide clarity and consistency in state and federal roles in pesticide labeling. It reinforces the EPA's role as the national authority on pesticide labeling and packaging requirements.

A significant concern of many in the agricultural industry is if there is not a resolution to this type of litigation there will be loss of important products used by farmers. Bayer has publicly stated that without resolution to this issue, the company will be compelled to remove glyphosate from the market. Bayer is the only domestic producer of glyphosate.

Read more about Bayer's potential decision to remove glyphosate from the shelves:

Policy

Tennessee Farm Bureau Crop Protection (Partial)

We urge Congress to provide greater oversight of EPA's review of crop protection products. EPA must be held accountable to make timely, science-based decisions and not bow under pressure from activist groups. We oppose any legal action based on excessively broad interpretations of environmental laws which restrict or limit the safe and proper use of agricultural crop protection products. Products which have undergone proper approval processes under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) should be protected from frivolous lawsuits making unsubstantiated health or safety claims.

Economic Policy (Partial)

The U.S. cannot afford to allow our regulatory, litigation, labor, and other input costs to rise to the point our nation becomes vulnerable to economic blackmail. Our rural communities are suffering from the loss of jobs. We urge Congress to study ways to lower our production costs and remain competitive worldwide.

American Farm Bureau
336 / Agricultural Chemicals (Partial)

1. Agricultural chemicals are important in continuing to supply consumers with an abundant, safe, nutritious, high quality and reasonably priced food supply. We are committed to continuing the use of agricultural chemicals in a safe and judicious manner so as to protect the health and safety of producers, our employees, our families, our communities and the environment.

8. Regulation

8.1. We believe implementation and defense of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) should be based on credible scientific information in order to benefit farmers, the environment and the public and should be the sole federal regulatory authority over pesticides.

8.3. We recommend that state and local law not be able to prevent the use of pesticide and herbicide products that have EPA approval. 8.3.1. We should continue to work with EPA on the use of pesticides in counties where endangered species are located to ensure we are not adding an undue burden on farmers.

8.3.2. Products that have undergone proper approval processes under FIFRA should be protected from frivolous lawsuits making unsubstantiated health and safety claims.

8.17. All approved agricultural chemicals, such as atrazine, acetachlor, glyphosate, diuron and simazine, are safe when used according to label and effective, economical crop protection chemicals that must continue to be available to farmers.

The MAHA Movement

Key Takeaways

- In February 2025, President Donald Trump signed an Executive Order creating the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) Commission.
- On May 22, 2025, the MAHA Commission released a report indicating potential drivers of chronic diseases in children. The report, titled *The MAHA Report: Making Our Children Healthy Again*, is divided into four sections focusing on key contributors the authors believe to be the leading causes of childhood chronic disease – ultra-processed foods, chemicals in the environment, childhood behavior in the digital age, and overmedicalization.
- After the report was released, agricultural organizations from across the country quickly pointed out the lack of farmer representation and input in the development of the report.
- While this report's purpose was to set the stage of the issue of chronic disease in children, it is expected the Commission will release another report with suggestions for policy changes in August 2025.

Questions

1. Are you prepared to defend the safe use of crop protection products to policymakers and the public?
2. What resources do you need to be better equipped to discuss the safety of crop protection products?
3. Should TFBF have specific policy positions on the MAHA movement?
4. If so, what?

Background

[1]In February of 2025, President Donald Trump signed an Executive Order creating the Make America Healthy Again (MAHA) Commission. Led by Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., the mission of the MAHA Commission is *"to advise and assist the President on how best to exercise his authority to address the childhood chronic disease crisis"* and to *"re-direct our national focus, in the public and private sectors, toward understanding and drastically lowering chronic disease rates and ending childhood chronic disease."* The Commission is directed to study any potential causes of childhood chronic disease, including *"the American diet, absorption of toxic material, medical treatments, lifestyle, environmental*

[1] Direct quotes from the MAHA report and other comments and statements are notated by italics and do not reflect the position of Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation.

[2]*factors, government policies, food production techniques, electromagnetic radiation, and corporate influence or cronyism."* With these directives, the Commission was charged with submitting an assessment to President Trump. Members of the MAHA Commission include:

- Vincent Haley, Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy – Executive Director
- Brooke Rollins, Secretary of Agriculture
- Scott Turner, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
- Linda McMahon, Secretary of Education
- Douglas Collins, Secretary of Veterans Affairs
- Lee Zeldin, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency
- Russell Vought, Director of the Office of Management and Budget
- Stephen Miller, Assistant to the President and Deputy Chief of Staff for Policy
- Dr. Kevin Hassett, Director of the National Economic Council
- Dr. Stephen Miran, Chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers
- Michael Kratsios, Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy
- Dr. Martin Makary, Commissioner of Food and Drugs
- Dr. Jayanta Bhattacharya, Director of the National Institutes of Health

On May 22, 2025, the MAHA Commission released a report indicating potential drivers of chronic diseases in children. The report, titled *The MAHA Report: Making Our Children Healthy Again*, is divided into four sections focusing on key contributors the authors believe to be the leading causes of childhood chronic disease.

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View the MAHA Report:

The Shift to Ultra-Processed Foods

Although recognizing there is no universal definition, the first section of the MAHA report vaguely defines Ultra-Processed Foods (UPFs) as *"packaged and ready-to-consume products that are*

[2]Direct quotes from the MAHA report and other comments and statements are notated by italics and do not reflect the position of Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation.

formulated for shelf life and/or palatability but are typically high in added sugars, refined grains, unhealthy fats, and sodium and low in fiber and essential nutrients." It cites nearly 70% of an American child's calories come from UPFs and attributes this to the *"corporatization and consolidation"* of the food system following World War II. Three main reasons UPFs should be of concern in a child's diet are identified – nutrient depletion, increased caloric intake, and inclusion of food additives. First, the report focuses on the replacement of nutrient-dense whole foods with three *"engineered components"* – ultra-processed grains, sugars, and fats – resulting in a reduction in consumption of essential vitamins, minerals, fiber, [3]and other nutrients. More specifically, animal-based fats like butter and lard over seed oils such as soybean, corn, canola, and others are prioritized for their health benefits. Multiple food additives are linked to increased risks of mental disorders, ADHD, cardiovascular disease, metabolic syndrome and even carcinogenic effects. The report focuses on food dyes, titanium dioxide, propylparaben, butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT), and artificial sweeteners as the most problematic food additives in UPFs. As a solution to UPF consumption, the report highlights multiple whole food sources containing important nutrients, including beef, whole milk and other dairy products, leafy greens, fish, legumes, nuts, and other fruits and vegetables. These are highlighted for being rich in nutrients such as calcium, iron, potassium, vitamin D, magnesium, omega-3 fatty acids, fiber, and others.

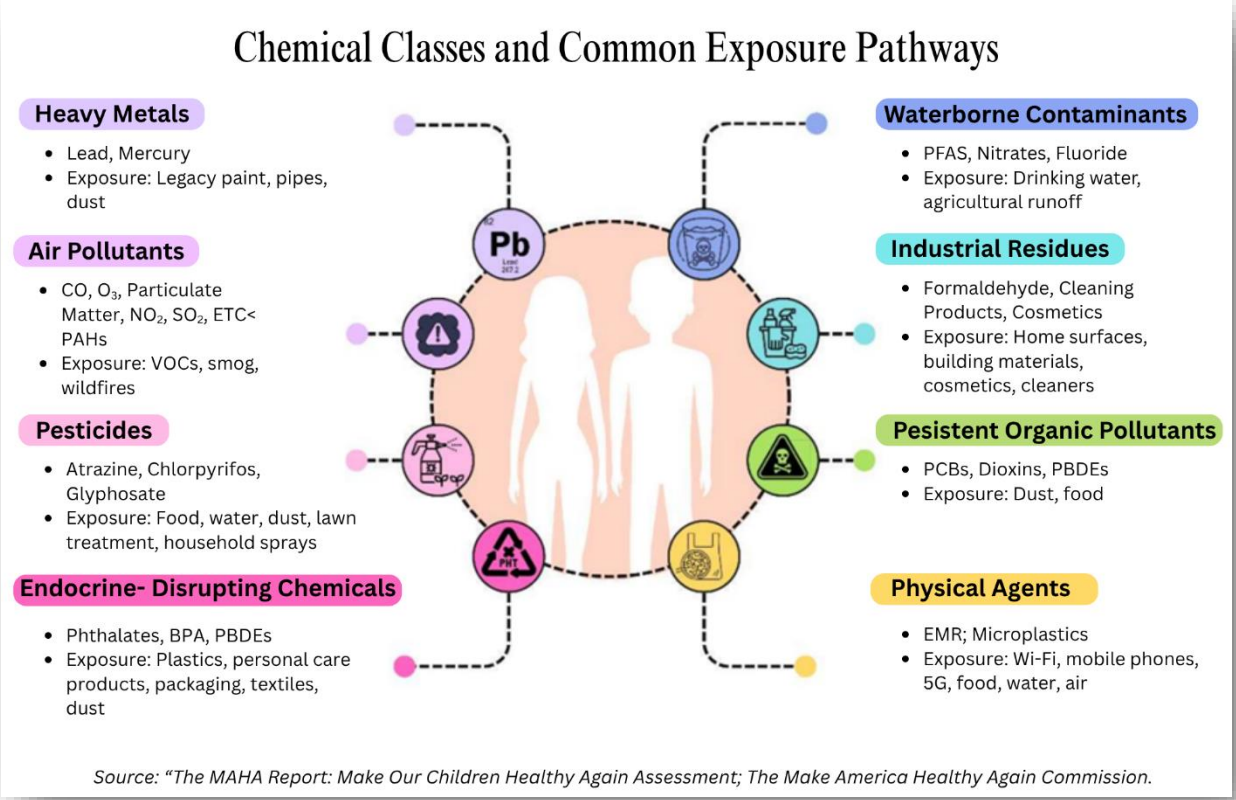
The Cumulative Load of Chemicals in Our Environment

The second section of the MAHA report outlines the existence of a mixture of chemicals in the environment children are exposed to. The report claims not enough research has been done on the effects of a cumulative load of exposures from different *"environmental chemicals"*, including per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), microplastics, fluoride, electromagnetic radiation, phthalates, bisphenols, and even pesticides.

While saying human health assessments are limited, pesticide exposure – specifically naming glyphosate and atrazine – is linked to multiple health effects such as reproductive and developmental disorders, cancers, liver inflammation, endocrine disruption, and birth defects. The report also recognizes the high compliance rate of pesticides with EPA's safety standards and the lack of direct links to human health risks when these products are used in accordance with their approved labels. However, EPA's Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) regulatory process is questioned, citing these high FIFRA compliance rates while also discussing other studies finding high concentrations of pesticide residues in commonplace and other safety concerns. When discussing research related to pesticide safety and regulations about pesticide enforcement, the report indicates undue bias by targeting the influence of

[3] Direct quotes from the MAHA report and other comments and statements are notated by italics and do not reflect the position of the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation.

pesticide manufacturers in industry-funded research and lobbying efforts.



[4]The Crisis of Childhood Behavior in the Digital Age

The third section of the report focuses on the impacts of changes in physical activity, mental health, chronic stress, and social media use on children. This section points out multiple causes – including reduced recess and in-school activities, increased screen time and social media usage, lack of quality sleep, loneliness, and changes in family dynamics – presumably resulting in increased cases of ADHD, depression, anxiety, and other mental health conditions in children. Significant emphasis is placed on a child's increased use of technology at a young age, highlighting effects on sleep, self-esteem, anxiety, and depression.

The Overmedicalization of Kids

Section three ends suggesting in the event to address behavioral and other medical challenges, children are being over diagnosed leading to overmedicalization. Section four starts by reporting the increase in use of prescription medications such as antidepressants, antipsychotics, antibiotics, asthma medication, GLP-1 drugs, and others. The over-use of these types of medications is linked to numerous health risks and longer-term health concerns.

[4] *Direct quotes from the MAHA report and other comments and statements are notated by italics and do not reflect the position of the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation.*

Similarly, vaccine use in children is questioned, suggesting the safety of a complex vaccination system in children and its link to chronic disease is not fully understood and has not been properly studied. This section compares vaccine schedules in children in European countries to the United States, emphasizing other countries using less than half as many vaccinations and not having school vaccination mandates. While major emphasis is put on vaccine use, the report does not mention animal vaccine use at all.

Corporate Capture

Throughout the entire report, the Commission emphasizes the need for more reliable science and increased studies into the four major focus areas for chronic childhood disease. Peer-reviewed studies, individual research, and industry-wide statistics are used multiple times to [5]set the stage for the four focus areas for childhood chronic disease and why the public should be concerned about them. However, in the final section, the Commission inserts the notion industry interests, termed "*corporate capture",* are overinfluencing "*scientific literature, legislative actions, academic institutions, regulatory agencies, medical journals, physician organizations, clinical guidelines, and the news media*". Most concerningly, the massive amounts of peer-reviewed science used to validate the safety and efficacy of modern agricultural technology like crop protection products are seen by the Commission as "*ineffective and biased*", stating "*reviewers at top [scientific] journals are untrained, ineffective when tested, and many have financial ties to drug companies*". The Commission also insinuates advocacy groups and lobbying efforts are unduly influenced by large corporations and do not represent the best interests of the average American citizen.

Post-Report Response from the Agricultural Community

When talking about crop protection products, the Commission explicitly highlights the importance of involving the agricultural community when making decisions about the United States food system. The report says:

"Importantly, the Executive Order establishing the MAHA Commission directed the involved agencies to work with farmers to ensure that United States food is the healthiest, most abundant, and most affordable in the world. American farmers are critical partners in the success of the Make America Healthy Again agenda. All the involved agencies are therefore committed to ensuring not just the survival, but the prosperity, of American Farmers. American farmers rely on these products, and actions that further regulate or restrict crop protection tools beyond risk-based and scientific processes set forth by Congress must involve thoughtful consideration of what is necessary for adequate protection, alternatives, and cost of production. Precipitous changes in agricultural practices could have an adverse impact on American agriculture and the domestic and global food supply. The federal government will continue to regularly review the safety of these important crop protection tools."

[5] *Direct quotes from the MAHA report and other comments and statements are notated by italics and do not reflect the position of the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation.*

Leading up to its release, Farm Bureau and other agricultural organizations pushed to participate in discussions with key contributors of the report and were not involved. After the report was released, agricultural organizations from across the country quickly pointed out the lack of farmer representation and input in the development of the report. In his statement, American Farm Bureau Federation President Zippy Duvall criticized the Commission. He said:

"It is deeply troubling for the White House to endorse a report that sows seeds of doubt and fear about our food system and farming practices, then attempts to celebrate farmers and the critical role they play in producing the safest food supply in the world. Farmers are identified as 'critical partners,' yet were excluded from the development of the report, despite many requests for a seat at the table. The report also expresses a desire to ensure farmers continue to thrive, [6]but undermining confidence in our food system directly contradicts that noble goal. The report spotlights outlier studies and presents unproven theories that feed a false narrative and only then does it acknowledge a mountain of evidence about the safety of our food system. We suspect USDA had a prominent role in the report's recognition that farmers are the critical first step in the food system, but as a whole, the report falls short. The American people were promised transparency yet presented with a report developed in secret."

While this report's purpose was to set the stage of the issue of chronic disease in children, it is expected the Commission will release another report with suggestions for policy changes in August 2025. Agricultural organizations, including Farm Bureau, have been meeting with MAHA Commission members and other White House officials, including a meeting with President Trump, throughout the summer to provide input in preparation for the upcoming policy recommendations.

Policy

Tennessee Farm Bureau
Government Regulations (Partial)

Excessive government regulations strangle the productive capacity of our nation and waste our resources. Government agencies often make rules and regulations by administrative decree. Unfortunately, regulations by different agencies of government frequently conflict. All rules published in the Federal Register should undergo Congressional review and approval before final implementation. Too often, elected representatives relinquish their decision-making responsibilities to regulators or designated boards. The United States Supreme Court's ruling to overturn *Chevron* deference in *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo* restored the federal government's balance of power and recognized the ever-growing number of burdensome regulations administered by federal agencies. Farm Bureau must continue to work with all branches of government and keep each accountable to fulfill their constitutional roles.

[6] *Direct quotes from the MAHA report and other comments and statements are notated by italics and do not reflect the position of the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation.*

As regulatory agencies become more involved in controlling agricultural production practices, Farm Bureau should insist on a fair representation of agricultural production and land ownership. We encourage better communication among regulators and producers.

Food Safety (Partial)

America's food supply is the safest, highest quality, most abundant, and most affordable in the world. Farmers recognize a safe food supply is important to the integrity of the agricultural industry but most importantly to the well-being and health of the consumer.

With changing technology, the process of maintaining a safe product from the field to the table can always be improved. Policies and procedures that build trust and reliability in agriculture should reflect the lates in technology and research. Regulatory oversight should not impede farmers' ability to produce. The risks versus the benefits should be considered in any food safety legislation or regulatory proposals. On-farm authority of government agencies should not be expanded. Quality assurance programs, research from agricultural colleges, and education of food handlers throughout the food supply chain should take priority over expansion of the regulatory process. Increased costs to producers from on-farm inspections and standards should be a last resort of any legislative or regulatory initiative to improve food safety.

Animal Welfare (Partial)

Livestock producers continually strive to keep their animals healthy through robust biosecurity, vaccination, and treatment programs. We support the advancement of properly researched and industry-tested animal health technologies to enable farmers to improve the care and management of their livestock and combat emerging diseases.

Crop Protection (Partial)

We support legislation limiting authority for pesticide regulation solely to federal and state governments.

We oppose any regulations requiring a permit before application of a crop protection product. We oppose curtailment of the proper use of crop protection products, unless further research and scientific data detect injury to health and well-being would result.

We urge Congress to provide greater oversight of EPA's review of crop protection products. EPA must be held accountable to make timely, science-based decisions and not bow under pressure from activist groups. We oppose any legal action based on excessively broad interpretations of environmental laws which restrict or limit the safe and proper use of agricultural crop protection products. Products which have undergone proper approval processes under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) should be protected from frivolous lawsuits making unsubstantiated health claims.

Health and Medical (Partial)

Tennessee's childhood obesity and diabetes rates are alarmingly high, causing health concerns and increased healthcare costs. We encourage Farm Bureau to continue to educate Tennesseans, particularly youth, on the health benefits of maintaining a healthy weight.

Over the past 50 years, fluoridation of community drinking water has been a major factor responsible for the decline in tooth decay. Water fluoridation remains the most equitable and cost-effective method of delivering fluoride to all members of most communities, regardless of age, educational experience, or income levels.

Prescription drugs are an expensive component of health insurance. Among all the states, Tennessee has one of the highest per-capita prescription drug use rates and has experienced the greatest increase in the use of prescription painkiller drugs.

Agricultural Research (Partial)

Public research institutions must remember their purpose is to serve the public interest. Privately funded grants should be accepted only in cases where the public service function of the institution will not be compromised. Patents or copyrights developed through research at public institutions should remain the property of the institution and be managed as public assets. Grants of exclusive rights to such patents should be made with great care and with the public interest in mind.

American Farm Bureau
110 / Regulatory Review and Reform (Partial)

9. Regulations, including guidance documents, that affect farmers should only be adopted after appropriate public notice and comment.

12. We support:

> 12.7. Meaningful stakeholder representation by affected sectors on regulatory boards and commissions as well as a willingness to override unacceptable agency actions;

13. We oppose:

> 13.3. Any consumer agency or council having any federal authority other than advisory powers;
>
> 13.4. Federal regulations on generally accepted agricultural practices;

160 / Nutrition (Partial)

1. We support:

1.2. Recognition by USDA and the Food and Drug Administration of studies and research in nutrition which are based on published standard research criteria whether funded by producer groups or other recognized research groups;

2. We oppose:

2.1. Anyone dictating which foods should and should not be eaten, including imposing "health taxes" on food and beverages; and

2.2. Using taxpayers' money for the purpose of legislating or controlling the diets of American people.

336 / Agricultural Chemicals (Partial)

1. Agricultural chemicals are important in continuing to supply consumers with an abundant, safe, nutritious, high quality and reasonably priced food supply. We are committed to continuing the use of agricultural chemicals in a safe and judicious manner so as to protect the health and safety of producers, our employees, our families, our communities, and the environment.

8. Regulation

8.1. We believe implementation and defense of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) should be based on credible scientific information in order to benefit farmers, the environment, and the public and should be the sole federal regulatory authority over pesticides.

8.2. There must be clear guidelines for how EPA determines if data is credible, verifiable, timely, and science-based.

8.17. All approved agricultural chemicals, such as atrazine, acetachlor, glyphosate, diuron and simazine, are safe when used according to label and effective, economical crop protection chemicals that must continue to be available to farmers.

461 / Research (Partial)

1. The food and agriculture research, extension, and education system must support, build, and maintain a critical mass of well-trained scientists in the public sector to ensure that the U.S. remains the leader in global agricultural production. An effective and efficient transfer of knowledge and technology for the benefit of agriculture producers and consumers worldwide must be maintained and remain a high priority in future budgets.

2. We support:

2.1. Ongoing efforts to elevate food, agricultural, and natural resources research as a national priority, including partnering with a broad coalition of stakeholders to develop

and deliver a unified message calling for moving agricultural research to the forefront of American Science.

2.2. Strengthening investments across the board in the U.S. food, agricultural, and natural resources research portfolio, including competitive grants, federal and state capacity funding, and additional public-private partnerships.

2.3. A commitment for increased investment across all federal agencies with significant roles in addressing critical priorities in food, agriculture, and natural resources through research.

2.6. Streamlining the process for more direct funding by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture to land grant universities directed toward production agriculture and mechanization research.

2.14. Federal investment in research that provides a mix of formula, competitive, and special grants and reauthorization of the competitive research facilities program for land grant universities.

2.25. Public, objective research and reporting of results without private company review, oversight, or other influence.

462 / Role of USDA (Partial)

1. Agriculture should remain the primary responsibility of USDA. Food and fiber consumers will be better served by healthy, profitable production agriculture than by consumer advocacy within USDA.

16. USDA should be:

16.1. A monitor of domestic and foreign agricultural affairs;

16.2. An accurate source of agricultural data and research; and,

16.3. An agricultural policy adviser to other departments of the federal government.

18. USDA should:

18.16. Appoint one or more farmers on any agriculturally related government board.

State Legislation Regarding Food Additives

Key Takeaways

- This year, the 114th Tennessee General Assembly considered legislation which would limit or ban certain food additives in Tennessee. Other southern states, such as Texas and Louisiana, have also considered or passed similar legislation with much broader sweeping impact.
- According to the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, a food additive refers to any substance for the intended use of which results or may reasonably be expected to result (directly or indirectly), in becoming a component or otherwise affecting the characteristic of any food.
- Currently, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has regulatory oversight of the safety of ingredients added directly to food and substances which come into contact with food, such as those added to packaged materials, cookware or food storage containers.

Questions

1. Historically, TFBF has expressed concern around state food labeling and restrictions because of concerns around interstate commerce. Should this same level of concern apply to food additives?
2. Should state legislatures consider bans on food additives, such as Red 40?
3. Should farm inputs, including fertilizer and crop protection products, be considered a food additive?

Background

The 114th Tennessee General Assembly was one of a handful of states amongst the Southeast region to consider legislation concerning food additives, such as synthetic dye. Ultimately, the legislation was signed by Governor Lee on May 21, 2025. As amended, a local education agency (LEA) is prohibited from including food or beverage items which contain "Allura Rec AC", also known as Red 40, from being sold, offered for sale, or provided to students on school property through the school nutrition program provided by the LEA, public charter school, or third party expressly authorized by the LEA or public charter school. This legislation will be implemented in schools on August 1, 2027.

Scan to read Public Chapter 476 of 2025:

Initial legislation was much broader and expanded to vending machines and any other school provided supply – it's anticipated there will be additional efforts to broaden this prohibition in future General Assemblies.

Other states passing legislation which includes language relative to food additives include Texas and Louisiana. The Texas General Assembly passed SB25, one of the most debated bills in Texas history, which requires food manufacturers to include warning labels on products containing specific substances. Similarly, Louisiana passed SB14, which will require food manufacturers to include warning labels on products containing certain substances deemed harmful, such as artificial colors, additives, and specific banned chemicals. Aside from food additives, some of the legislation considered by other states also includes label requirements if a product was treated with a crop protection product such as atrazine or glyphosate.

Motivation behind legislation being filed in state legislatures is perceived to come from the "Make America Healthy Again" (MAHA) movement. The MAHA Commission established by President Trump and led by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., is working to establish data and make policy suggestions which would make America's children healthy again, one of those points of research including food additives such as synthetic dyes like Red 40.

For more information about the MAHA Commission and their report, read the 2025 Policy Development paper entitled, The MAHA Movement.

What is considered a food additive? According to the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, a food additive refers to any substance for the intended use of which results or may reasonably be expected to result (directly or indirectly), in becoming a component or otherwise affecting the characteristic of any food. Direct food additives are those which are intentionally added to food for a specific purpose. For example, adding xanthan gum to chocolate milk or salad dressing to add texture.

Motivation behind legislation being filed in state legislatures is perceived to come from the "Make America Healthy Again" (MAHA) movement.

For more information on how the FDA considers food additive petitions and maintains oversight on these products:

Currently, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has regulatory oversight over the safety of ingredients added directly to food and substances which come into contact with food, such as those added to packaged materials, cookware or food storage containers. Before a product can be used on a food in the market, a food additive must be authorized by the FDA through a submitted petition by the manufacturer. Food additive petitions must provide evidence the substance is safe for the ways in which it will be used – including the foods it will be used in and the intended levels of use. The FDA consults with the U.S. Department of Agriculture during the review process for food additives which are proposed for use in meat and meat products.

When evaluating the safety of an ingredient submitted in a food additive, the FDA considers:

- What is the food ingredient?
- How will the food ingredient be made?
- How much of the ingredient will be in the food?
- What types of food will the ingredient be used in?
- How much of the food ingredient will consumers eat?
- How does the body metabolize the food ingredient (including absorption, digestion, metabolism, and excretion)?
- What are the results of relevant scientific studies on the safety of the ingredient?

As more states individually address food additives through legislation to add additional regulations or ban the use of certain additives entirely, it's possible there could be inconsistencies and contradictions in the law and oversight of food from one state to another.

Policy

Tennessee Farm Bureau
Food Safety (Partial)

America's food supply is the safest, highest quality, most abundant, and most affordable in the world. Farmers recognize a safe food supply is important to the integrity of the agricultural industry but most importantly to the well-being and health of the consumer.

With changing technology, the process of maintaining a safe product from the field to the table can always be improved. Policies and procedures that build trust and reliability in agriculture should reflect the latest in technology and research. Regulatory oversight should not impede farmers' ability to produce. The risks versus the benefits should be considered in any food safety legislation or regulatory proposals. On-farm authority of government agencies should not be expanded. Quality assurance programs, research from agricultural colleges, and education of food handlers throughout the food supply chain should take priority over expansion of the regulatory process. Increased costs to producers from on-farm inspections and standards should be a last resort of any legislative or regulatory initiative to improve food safety.

Integrity in food labeling is a vital element in maintaining food safety. Food labeling requirements should remain a function of the federal government. We oppose separate state level labeling requirements of foods sold through interstate commerce. Likewise, we also oppose any statewide ban of food products. We support consumer friendly, science-based labeling of agricultural products providing consumers with useful information concerning the ingredients, nutritional value, and country of origin. Labels should not be required to contain information on production practices not affecting nutrition or safety of the product. Agricultural products produced using approved technologies should not be required to farm designate individual inputs or specific technologies on the product label. We oppose misleading labeling statements such as “bST free milk” implying food produced using certain production practices is superior and safer than food using other approved production practices.

Foods manufactured to imitate conventional agricultural products should meet the same safety standards and have separate label requirements that signify the difference of the imitation food. With the increasing availability of lab-grown, cell-derived, and plant-based protein being introduced into the marketplace, we believe proteins designed to imitate conventionally raised meat should not use commonly known and industry recognized “meat” terms and be properly labeled and advertised to signify their differences. We oppose the use of environmental claims about lab grown, cell-derived, and plant-based proteins in the marketing of the product which is not verified by USDA as a regulatory agency and based on peer-reviewed, sound science. We oppose the false labeling or “greenwashing” of non-meat products as having less impact on the environment. Jurisdiction over lab-grown, cell-derived, and plant-based protein should be assigned to USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS). We acknowledge FDA’s role in determining the product’s safety, but the day-to-day primary regulation and oversight for the product should reside with USDA FSIS.

American Farm Bureau
341 / Food Quality and Safety

1. The American food supply is the safest, most abundant and affordable in the world. Agricultural chemicals and other technological advances play a major role in maintaining both the quality and quantity of our food supply.

2. We will monitor initiatives to improve and streamline food safety to ensure that policies and procedures are in place that build trust and reliability in U.S. agriculture.

3. We believe food safety issues at the producer level should be handled through "quality assurance programs."

8. We support:

8.3. Voluntary guidelines rather than federal or state mandates.

8.4. The establishment and promotion of sound scientific research criteria which ensure the safety of food additives.

8.12. Cooperative efforts with food processors, chemical companies, government agencies, scientists and other to provide factual information on the safety of our food supply.

8.33. Continued research about the impacts of consuming synthetic dyes and expanding options for synthetic dye-free foods in the American food system.

State SNAP Waivers

Key Takeaways

- Six states have passed legislation requesting waivers for certain items including candy, sodas, and other items to be removed from SNAP benefits; those have all been signed and approved by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins.
- Tennessee had legislation put off to 2026 for SNAP waivers on candy and soft drinks.
- Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation (TFBF) does not have policy on the issue. American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) has policy in place supporting the removal of carbonated beverages that are non-fruit, vegetables, and dairy beverages.

Questions

1. Should TFBF have more policy surrounding the implementation of SNAP?
2. Does the precedent of states signing up for SNAP waivers cause concern for similar action taken on other farm bill programs?
3. Would farmers in your area be affected by these products being removed from SNAP benefits?
4. If so, how?

Background

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps, provides food benefits to low-income families so they can afford nutritious foods that are essential to human health and overall well-being. SNAP is funded and operated through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) while the states are responsible for issuing these benefits.

SNAP benefits allow individuals access to purchase food from all five major food groups - fruits, vegetables, grains, proteins, and dairy - which includes foods like chips and other snack foods. Seeds and plants are also available for those with SNAP so they can grow their own food at home. Some of the ineligible items are alcohol, tobacco, hot foods, and personal care items.

In May of 2025, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins, at the direction of President Trump, signed the first ever waiver to amend the definition of food for purchase for Nebraska's SNAP, removing soda and energy drinks from the benefits. Since then, five more states have had their waivers signed by Secretary Rollins changing the statutory definition of food for purchase for SNAP.

Six states have passed legislation requesting waivers for certain items including candy, sodas, and other items to be removed from SNAP benefits.

While there is currently no waiver pending Secretary Rollins's signature from the State of Tennessee, there is a bill titled the "Tennessee Healthy SNAP Act" which has been deferred to 2026. The bill would require the Tennessee Department of Human Services to submit a request for a waiver from the USDA to prohibit the use of SNAP benefits for the purchase of candy and soft drinks. All the sweeteners listed in the bill are all products derived from corn, sugar cane, milk, or other agricultural products. In its current form, the bill has an amendment which would allow for any drink with less than five grams of sugar to be purchased with SNAP benefits.

Policy

Tennessee Farm Bureau
Farm Policy (Partial)

We oppose separating nutrition programs from other titles of the farm bill. The farm bill is America's food security policy. We believe it serves the nation well for Congress to enact legislation ensuring a safe and abundant food supply and access to food for those in need.

American Farm Bureau
464 / Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Partial)

4. We support:

4.2. Items purchased by SNAP benefits should be limited to the five basic food groups.

4.9. Efforts to expand the purchases of meat, dairy products, fruits and vegetables.

4.10. Elimination of carbonated beverages from food available in/under assistance programs and those non-fruit, vegetable and dairy beverages with bottle deposits.

4.11. The use of SNAP for U.S.-produced agricultural products when available.

4.16. SNAP exploring new ways to ensure fresh food access in food deserts.

4.17. Continued use of SNAP for seasonal farm markets, farm stands, CSAs and other retail farm markets.

Biosolid Application and Local Government Regulation

Key Takeaways

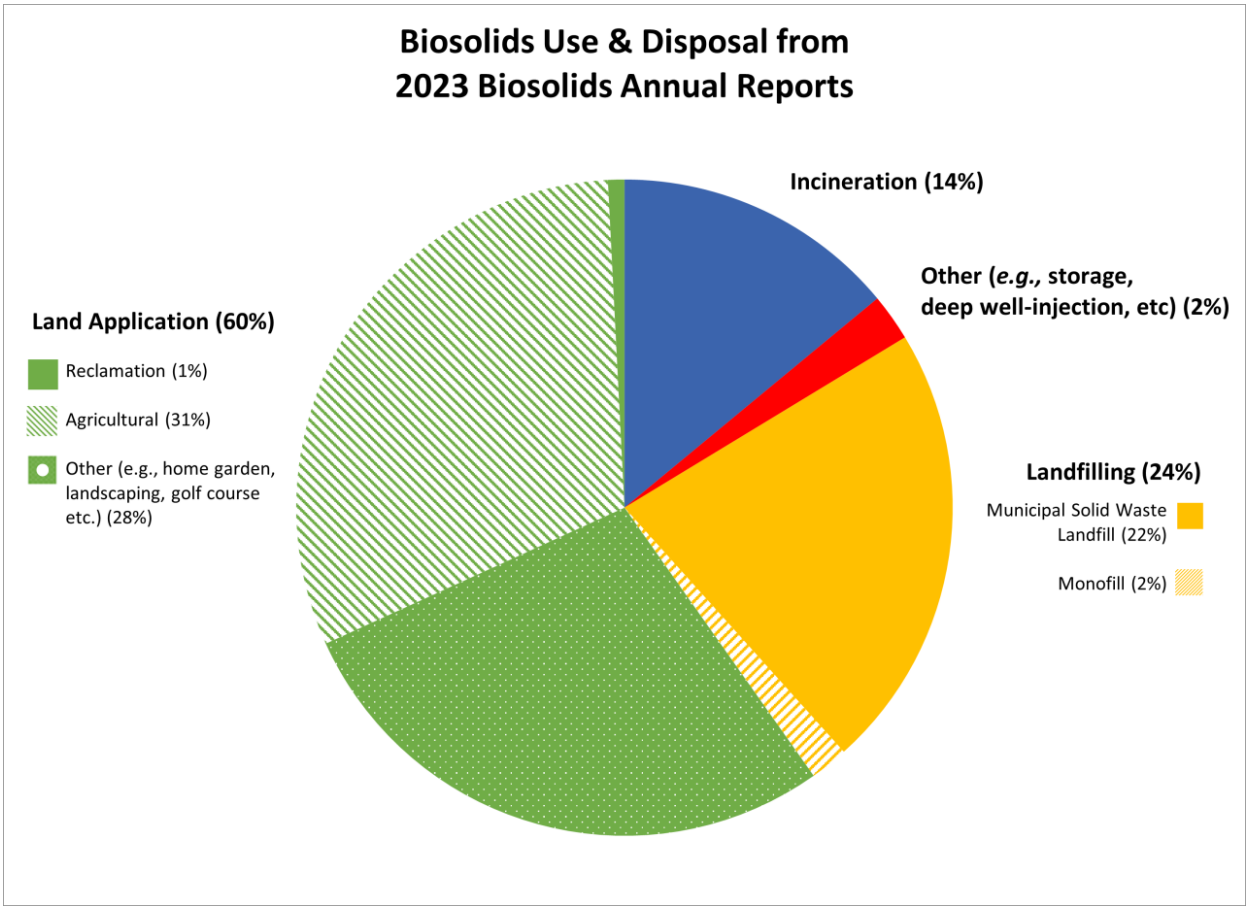
- Biosolids are nutrient-rich organic materials resulting from the treatment of domestic sewage in a wastewater treatment facility (i.e., treated sewage sludge).
- There are different classes of biosolids which are dependent upon the level of processing; typically, the higher class is associated with less smell.
- Biosolids application offers a unique opportunity for farmers to have access to fertilizer for a low cost, or even at no cost to the landowner. Utilizing biosolids does have potential risks, including heavy metal or PFAS contamination.
- Local governments have sought the ability to regulate the farm use of biosolids through state legislation.
- Farm Bureau policy opposes local governments gaining authority to regulate farm practices, including the application of biosolids.

Questions

1. Do you or farmers in your county use biosolids as fertilizer?
2. Have there been issues in your community surrounding biosolid application based on smell or safety?
3. Do you need additional information about biosolid applications?
4. What, if any, additional regulations should there be on biosolid application?
5. Should local governments have authority to regulate the farm use of biosolid application as fertilizer?

Background

Biosolids are the residuals left over from wastewater treatment facilities which have been treated to meet Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards and can be used as fertilizer and soil conditioners. Untreated residuals from wastewater treatment are referred to sewage sludge. Generally, sewage sludge is disposed of via landfilling or incineration, while biosolids are treated and safely land applied to agricultural land, forests, rangelands, disturbed land in need of reclamation, or nonagricultural lands such as parks, golf courses, and home lawns and gardens.



Source: Environmental Protection Agency

To be land applied as biosolids, wastewater residuals must be treated to federal and state requirements. Land application of biosolids is regulated by both the EPA and Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC). There are three classes of biosolids which have specified requirements for vector attraction reduction, as well as general requirements and management practices, which are Class B Biosolids, Class A Biosolids, and Class A- Exceptional Quality (EQ) Biosolids. Class B Biosolids are treated to significantly reduce, but do not eliminate pathogens in sewage sludge, which is why there are additional requirements when Class B biosolids are applied. Class B biosolids may not be applied to lands with high potential for human exposure, limiting site access for humans and grazing animals, and harvesting restrictions, which allow time for further pathogen degradation. Generally, Class B Biosolids are associated with the most smell. Class A Biosolids are further treated to reduce the risk from pathogens present in treated sewage sludge; thus, there are fewer additional requirements for land application of Class A biosolids. Class A-EQ Biosolids meet the most stringent pollutant, pathogen, and vector attraction reduction limits set by the EPA and are often sold directly to the public for use in home gardens and on lawns. As with most things, the

higher the class, the higher the costs of processing for the wastewater treatment plant. For more information about EPA's regulations of biosolids, scan the QR code.

Farmers typically acquire biosolids through a third-party contractor who has an agreement with the wastewater treatment plant to disperse the biosolids. Under most circumstances, the third-party contractor transports and spreads the biosolids on the farm, however, individual circumstances can vary. Often, the biosolids are provided to the farmer at little to no cost.

To spread biosolids in Tennessee, there must be a permit obtained from TDEC which has specific requirements including measures to protect water quality and ensure there is not overapplication for soil health. TDEC is under the process of updating the rules associated with the permit. Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation (TFBF) submitted comments in the regulatory process which supported the reissuance of the general permit for the land application of biosolids based upon policy. Two key points were made in public comments.

First, the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture (UTIA) conducted a study which compared using biosolids, broiler litter, and commercial fertilizer. In summation, the study found when using appropriate application rates, biosolids are a viable alternative to traditional commercial fertilizer. Furthermore, soil tests indicate buildup of metals is not a concern and can provide plants with available metal micronutrients such as copper and zinc. TFBF encouraged TDEC to consult with UTIA for questions, concerns, and recommendations for agronomic applications of biosolids.

Second, TFBF requested TDEC require testing of biosolids for chemical contaminants such as perchlorate and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) which could put farms at risk. TFBF supports TDEC requiring wastewater management facilities to test for these chemicals on-site before giving farmers access to biosolids and other substances based on the best available science. Farmers and landowners who use biosolids should not be liable if PFAS is detected on their farm as farmers do not manufacture or knowingly spread PFAS on their farms. There have been instances in other states where biosolid application has led to unsafe levels of PFAS in the soil on farms. TDEC has indicated to TFBF the new

Read TFBF's comments and view the study conducted by UTIA:

Read the 2022 Policy Development Paper on PFAS:

rules for the general permit will require testing for PFAS when the rules are completed later in 2025.

In recent years there have been several attempts at legislation which would allow a singular county to be able to regulate biosolid waste within their county. Specifically, the legislation would amend Tennessee Code Annotated 5-1-118 which prohibits county governments from regulating agriculture. TFBF has specific policy which opposes granting local governments the ability to regulate agriculture and the spread of biosolids. Generally, the county governments have expressed concerns about the smell, impact to water quality, and fear of PFAS contamination as what prompted the local desire for these new regulations. TFBF expects debate in the General Assembly surrounding how much government regulation should exist for biosolid application.

Policy

Tennessee Farm Bureau
Litter and Waste (Partial)

Applying biosolids to fields from wastewater management facilities and alternative fertilizers from food manufacturing processes is a viable alternative to commercial fertilizer. Farm application of biosolids and alternative fertilizers should be regulated by the state government, not local governments. However, chemical contaminants such as perchlorate and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) put farms at risk. Wastewater management facilities and food manufacturers should be required to test for these chemicals on-site and provide a copy of the complete analysis verifying the ingredients are legally safe before giving farmers access to biosolids and other substances and be held liable if found to cause financial damages to landowners. Landowners and farmers, including renters and lessees, should not be liable if these chemicals are detected on their farm.

Land Use Planning (Partial)

We oppose federal, state, or local legislation imposing land use regulations to qualify for federal grants and loans or to participate in other government programs. No government agency should have the right to control land use without specific legislative authority. Local governments should not use zoning or local government functions as a tool to regulate agricultural practices.

American Farm Bureau
506 / Waste Disposal and Recycling (Partial)

1. We support:

    1.7 Government agencies responsible for approving land application systems allowing private agriculture to utilize municipal wastewater and sludge.

1.9.6. Provide farmers with an analysis of nutrients, heavy metals, and trace elements of biosolids applied to fields.

1.10. Government agencies must utilize proven current scientific information when developing policies concerning the application of sludge. The responsibility of this being required to rest with the waste handling authorities.

1.11. Each state having the right to require that all municipal biosolid applications be tracked using Global Positioning System (GPS) technology and be reported electronically.

1.12. Pathogen certification for sludge imported from out of state being supplemented with periodic instate lab tests, with results transmitted simultaneously to the applicator, the farmer, and the government.

547 / Water Quality (Partial)

7.1. Landowners, producers or their lenders shall not be held liable for the cost of chemical contaminants cleanups, such as perchlorate and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), caused by actions over which the producer, landowner or lender had no management oversight or control of decision-making.

7.2. We support:

7.2.1. Funding for research into the health risks and strategies for mitigating risks associated with chemical contaminants in water and food.

7.2.2. Using the best available science and appropriate risk assessment for the establishment of health goals or regulatory standards and recommend the science and risk assessment used are sound and correct.

7.2.3. Peer-reviewed, science-based research resulting in health advisory level recommendations and maximum contaminant levels for drinking water that are detectable and feasible to achieve.

7.2.4. Collaboration of agencies, universities, and the private sector to develop proactive solutions and technologies to reduce the human health and environmental risks of emerging contaminants such as PFOS/PFAS.

7.2.5. Establishing an indemnification program and funding to properly compensate farmers', producers' and/or landowners' financial losses associated with emerging contaminants such as PFOS/PFAS.

7.2.6. Eliminating any liability of agricultural producers and agricultural retailers/applicators for contamination by PFAS or forever chemicals on agricultural commodities or land.

7.3. We oppose:

7.3.1. Any legislation or administrative decision that releases the federal government (i.e.. the Department of Defense) and their contractors and subcontractors from liability associated with pollution of their land, water, crops, livestock or products by chemical contaminants.

Introducing Gene Editing Technology in Livestock

Key Takeaways:

- Porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS) was first reported in the U.S. in 1987. Since then, outbreaks of PRRS have been confirmed throughout North America, Asia, South America, Africa, and Europe. There are currently no effective treatments, although modified-live vaccines provide partial protection against infection.
- In April 2025, Genus Pig Improvement Company (Genus PIC), a Tennessee based company who specializes in pork genetics and technology, received Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval for gene editing technology used in its PRRS-resistant pig, determining the technology is safe and effective based on FDA standards. *FDA approval does not automatically trigger commercialization in the U.S.*
- Critics of gene editing raise concerns about overpopulation of a species as well as question the approval process and safety and effectiveness of the product. However, proponents of utilizing the technology boast improved animal welfare, reduced need for antibiotics, and minimized environmental impacts as driving forces behind implementing gene editing.

Questions:

1. If gene edited livestock were available to you, would you incorporate such technology in your operation?
2. How does gene editing technology impact consumer confidence in the food system?
3. When marketed, should products which utilize gene editing technology be regulated differently?

Background

Managing and preventing disease in livestock is a continuous process. There are currently over 140 diseases listed on the United States Department of Agriculture's list of nationally reportable diseases.

What if producers were able to attain genetics which carry disease resistant technology? Tennessee based company, Genus PIC, comes to the market with what they claim is a "breakthrough for a devastating problem." In April 2025, Genus PIC received FDA approval for gene editing technology used in its PRRS-resistant pig, determining the technology is safe and effective based on FDA standards.

PRRS, or porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome, has proven to be devastating to the U.S. pork population. A study from Iowa State University in 2024 shows growing losses from

PRRS cost pork producers $1.2 billion per year in the U.S., an estimate up from the previous $664 million from 2006-2010.

Gene editing technology in livestock has been in the research phase for over a decade. In cattle, gene editing has been centered around traits such as disease resistance, presence of horns, heat tolerance, and muscle development. In specialty crops, gene editing has been used to grow seedless blackberries and rice which is more resistant to hot, dry climates. Outside of production agriculture, even wildlife geneticists are working to "de-extinct" the dire wolf population by using gene editing technology.

These advances in technology have not come without skepticism from consumers. Critics of gene editing raise concerns about overpopulation of a species as well as question the approval process and safety and effectiveness of the product.

However, proponents of utilizing the technology boast improved animal welfare, reduced need for antibiotics, and minimized environmental impacts as driving forces behind implementing gene editing. At a hearing in Washington D.C. focused on gene editing, a Nebraska farmer claimed gene editing can help farmers address consumer demands while dealing with changing weather patterns and disease mitigation. "We have to make sure we're building that trust with consumers and educating them not only on the benefits gene editing will have on agriculture and how that will help us accomplish producing more with less, but we also need to make sure we're answering consumer's questions," he stated.

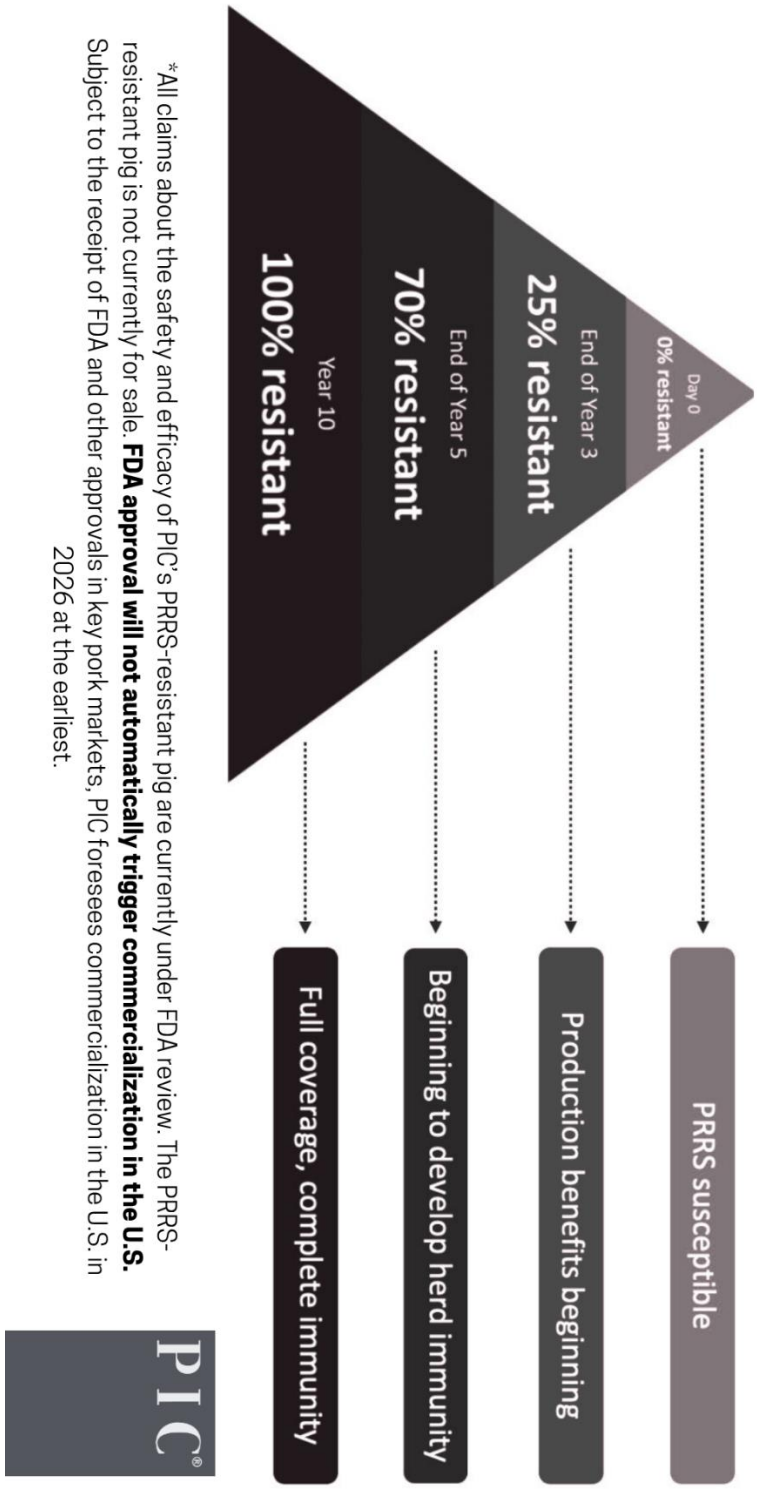
So, how does it work? Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats, or CRISPR, technology allows for precise changes in the DNA of a genome and can be as targeted down to the singular molecular level. What's the difference between gene editing and genetically modified organisms such as those utilized in the row crop industries? Gene editing deletes a specific portion of a gene from an organism's own DNA and does not insert any foreign DNA – in other words a form of selective breeding. Genetically modified organisms introduce DNA from another organism to modify the genetic code of an organism. While similar, the two phrases should not be considered interchangeably.

As for the PRRS-resistant pig, the FDA approval does not automatically trigger commercialization in the U.S. Subject to

Clustered Regularly Interspaced Short Palindromic Repeats, or CRISPR, technology allows for precise changes in the DNA of a genome and can be as targeted down to the singular molecular level.

Read more about the PRRS-resistant pig, including the stages of research and development:

receipt of FDA and other approvals in key pork markets, PIC foresees commercialization in the U.S. in 2026 at the earliest. The graph below shows PIC's incremental timeline to allow the pork market to adjust to the introduction.



Policy

Tennessee Farm Bureau
Biotechnology (Partial)

Advancements in biotechnology are having tremendous positive impacts on agriculture. These developments benefit all sectors of our society, not just agriculture. Therefore, Farm Bureau should strive to inform the public of the benefits implementation of these new production practices will have on the environment and the well-being of the community.

We support increased efforts through biotechnology to increase the marketability of our products, to solve environmental concerns, to increase net farm income by decreasing input costs, and to improve product quality and acceptability.

We urge state and national political leaders to develop a positive national strategy for biotechnology research and development. Part of this strategy should include an open and frank dialogue with all interested parties. Only the continued support and encouragement of technological advancements will assure our viability in world markets. We encourage USDA to take a lead in coordinating efforts to evaluate and move approved products and technologies to the marketplace quickly. The approval of new products should be based on safety and efficacy criteria and not on socioeconomic criteria.

Patents should be broad enough to provide reasonable protection of development costs but not so broad as to grant one developer the right to a whole class of future developments. Patents should be granted only on invented devices or processes, not on discoveries of naturally occurring genes, chemicals, or other biological systems. Companies should not sell U.S. patented seeds in countries that do not provide patent protection. This gives foreign producers a competitive advantage over U.S. farmers who must pay for development costs and abide by patent laws. Farm Bureau should work to inform farmers of their rights and obligations under U.S. patent laws regarding plant varieties and other biological material.

We oppose any law or regulation requiring registration of farmers who use or sell products approved for sale by the Food and Drug Administration.

We oppose mandatory labeling of genetically modified foods. We oppose the classification of Bt corn as a chemical by EPA. We support advancements in genome editing that could increase productivity to Tennessee farms. There are several approaches to genome editing, of which the CRISPR-Cas9 method shows promise for all agriculture. The agricultural industry should work to bring a positive image for biotechnology and genome editing.

American Farm Bureau
343 / Genomic Editing

1. We support:

1.1. The use of gene editing in livestock, companion animals and crops;

1.2. Gene editing technology being regulated by USDA, not the Food and Drug Administration;

1.3. The use of sound science in the regulation of genetically edited products with the timely approval for human consumption. We believe that consumers, both domestic and foreign, deserve sound-science-based education on genomic editing;

1.4. A voluntary and uniform labeling system for products designed with gene editing; and

1.5. Continued research of genetic modification.

2026 Election: Constitutional Amendments

Key Takeaways

- In the 113th and 114th General Assemblies, the State of Tennessee passed an amendment to the state Constitution which would prohibit Tennessee from collecting statewide property tax.
- Tennessee hasn't issued a state property tax since the late 1940's.
- This has no impact on the local government's ability to collect property tax.
- All counties, except Sevier County, rely on property tax as their main source of revenue.
- There are two other constitutional amendments which will also be on the 2026 November gubernatorial ballot having to do with victims' rights and bail.

Questions

1. What information do you need as a County Farm Bureau in order to promote this constitutional amendment?
2. What information do you need on the other two amendments?
3. Does TFBF need policy on the other two amendments?
4. If so, what should the policy state?

Background

The property tax amendment to the State of Tennessee Constitution would prohibit the state from levying a statewide property tax on its citizens. The language of the amendment is as follows, "In accordance with the following provisions, all property real, personal, or mixed shall be subject to taxation, but the Legislature shall not levy, authorize, or otherwise permit any state tax upon such property…"

When the state still issued a property tax prior to 1949, they began to possess large amounts of land and property due to the financial strain caused during the Great Depression. To counteract the negative effect this was having on Tennesseans, property tax was phased out and replaced with the state sales tax which is known today. This amendment would ensure that Tennessee landowners will never be responsible for bearing the burden of keeping our state budget operable.

This amendment does not change how our counties and local governments collect property taxes. As every county across the state is dependent upon property tax, with the exception of Sevier County. Each county and municipality will be able to set their own rates and collect taxes as usual with no effect from this amendment if it were to pass. Property tax is the most important source of tax revenue for the local governments across our state and will be protected as such.

There are two other Constitutional Amendments which will be voted on in 2026, one having to do with victims rights and the other having to do with bail for serious crimes. The victims rights amendment deletes Article I, Section 35 of the Constitution and replaces it with 13 different rights which victims will have protected if the amendment were to pass. The bail amendment would change the law in which a prisoner would be held without bail if the evidence or presumption is great for five new crimes including an act of terrorism, grave torture, second degree murder, and a stipulation that if convicted of a crime that is held without release until at least 85% of the sentencing, bail may also be withheld.

Just like the U.S. Constitution, the Constitution of Tennessee is a living document which can be amended at any time – as long as the proper procedure is followed. Any amendment or amendments to the Constitution must pass by a simple majority first, then passed by two-thirds majority of both houses in two successive legislative sessions. The final step of an amendment is to be placed on the ballot for the next gubernatorial election, in the case of the three amendments mentioned, they will be voted on in the 2026 November general election. An amendment must receive a majority vote from the citizens of Tennessee to become a part of the Constitution.

Read more about the three Constitutional Amendments:

Policy

Tennessee Farm Bureau
State and Local Taxes (Partial)

In the future, when the state finds itself in need of new revenue, Farm Bureau believes a state property tax should not be an option. Therefore, we support a constitutional amendment preventing the state from collecting a statewide property tax. The burden of filling the gap in a budget deficit should not be put on farmers and property owners of the state.

New World Screwworm in the United States

Key Takeaways

- There is strong concern New World Screwworm (NWS) will spread into the United States and begin affecting the American cattle herd.
- In 2022, NWS reemerged in Panama and has been slowly making its way north since. In recent months, the NWS has spread north of its endemic habitat into Mexico, and cattle are their most common host.
- Since November 2024, there have been over 1,400 detections of NWS in Mexico. In early May of 2025, NWS was detected 127 miles outside the secondary threshold of Oaxaca and Vera Cruz, Mexico (less than 500 miles from the U.S./Mexico border).
- With the break in the secondary threshold, there is no longer enough sterile fly production capacity to keep NWS from moving further north.
- In May, efforts began to urge the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to build a sterile fly facility in the U.S.
- Secretary Brooke Rollins announced a five-step outline on how they plan to address the NWS threat.

Questions

1. If NWS crosses the border into the United States, how would a stop movement order affect your livestock operation?
2. Is Secretary Rollins's five-step response plan enough to address a NWS outbreak?
3. What other measures are needed to eradicate the NWS?

Background

The New World Screwworm (NWS) is a fly endemic to Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, and other South American countries. The NWS lays eggs on warm-blooded animals – livestock, poultry, wildlife, domestic animals, and even humans – typically around a fresh wound. When the eggs hatch, the NWS larvae feed on the surrounding flesh as they burrow into the wound. If left untreated, animals infested with NWS can die of trauma, toxicity, or other infections within two weeks.

In 2000, NWS was eradicated to Panama by using the Sterile Insect Technique, or the mass release of sterile male flies into specific areas. This prevents the spread of NWS when sterile male flies mate with wild females who produce unfertilized eggs. Since female NWS flies only mate once, the population rapidly shrinks and is ultimately eradicated. While the use of sterile flies is the only way to eradicate NWS, there are options for treatment once NWS is detected. First, screwworm infestations must be reported to state and federal authorities. Treatment

then involves killing and removing the larvae from the infested wound. Both Nitenpyram and Ivermectin are successful treatments for treating NWS infestations, as well as using anti-parasitics like lindane or ronnel.

In 2022, NWS reemerged in Panama and has been slowly making its way north since. In recent months, the NWS has spread north of its endemic habitat into Mexico, and cattle are their most common host. There is strong concern NWS will spread into the United States and begin affecting the American cattle herd. Should NWS enter the U.S., it is very likely the federal government would implement a series of stop movement orders on cattle and other livestock. To protect the U.S. from this threat, the U.S-Mexico border was closed to cattle, bison, and horses from Mexico on May 11, 2025, and again on July 9, 2025.

When NWS was discovered in the Mexican state of Chiapas in November 2024, primary and secondary thresholds were established as breaking points for fly control. The Panama production facility had enough capacity (about 100 million flies per week) to release sterile flies inside the buffer zone between the primary and secondary threshold and push them back to the biological barrier in Panama.

Currently, there is only one facility in the world to produce sterile flies located in Panama. Since November 2024, there have been over 1,400 detections of NWS in Mexico. In early May of 2025, NWS was detected 127 miles outside the secondary threshold of Oaxaca and Vera Cruz, Mexico (less than 500 miles from the U.S./Mexico border), leading to U.S. Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins's announcement to suspend live animal imports from Mexico. With the break in the secondary threshold, there is no longer enough sterile fly production capacity to keep NWS from moving further north.

Figure 1: New World Screwworm Moves Beyond Containment Threshold; Market Intel; American Farm Bureau Federation

USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) conducted an impact analysis using historical data to estimate the impacts of a screwworm outbreak in Texas. Texas is home to 12.5 million head of cattle, or about 14% of the U.S. herd. The study included costs incurred from the isolated 1976 outbreak, adjusted them for inflation, and applied them to today's cattle inventory in Texas. According to this study, the annual economic cost is estimated to be $1.9 billion.

On the farm level, the presence of NWS adds a considerable amount of cost to day-to-day operations, with death of infected cattle the single greatest expense. Loss of growth, medical bills, and other treatment expenses also impact a farmer's bottom line.

In May, efforts began to urge the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to build a sterile fly facility in the U.S. The Strengthening Tactics to Obstruct the Population of Screwworms (STOP Screwworms) Act would authorize funds for and direct USDA to construct a NWS sterile fly facility in the United States to combat the NWS outbreak. In conjunction, a group of 76 members of Congress sent a letter to Secretary Rollins urging USDA to act swiftly to construct a domestic sterile fly facility.

In response, Secretary Rollins announced a five-step outline on how they plan to address the NWS threat. Scan the QR code for a full outline of the plan.

Highlights include:

- Stop NWS from spreading in Mexico
    - Work closely with Mexico to improve its surveillance and detection by providing traps, lures, and technical assistance to Mexico
- Protect the U.S. border at all costs
    - Ensure regular reporting with Mexico as an early warning intervention
    - Escalate communications and public outreach along the border to raise awareness
    - Utilize the already existing fever tick framework and apply it to NWS
- Maximize readiness

On the farm level, the presence of NWS adds a considerable amount of cost to day-to-day operations, with death of infected cattle the single greatest expense.

Read the full outline of Secretary Rollins's plan:

    - Work with state animal health officials to finalize emergency management plans
    - Ensure sufficient NWS treatments and work to remove federal regulatory hurdles to those treatments (i.e., pesticides)
- Take the fight to NWS
    - Immediately begin construction on a sterile fly facility at Moore Air Base in Texas to dispense flies into both the U.S. and Mexico
- Innovate the way to eradication
    - Research new and efficient ways to improve sterile fly technology
    - Utilize land-grant universities along border states for various efforts such as surveillance, stakeholder outreach, and training and trap development

Policy

Tennessee Farm Bureau
Veterinary Services (Partial)

The state veterinarian should have all needed authority to act in events of emerging and/or foreign animal diseases and should have timely access and adequate resources to address emergency disease outbreaks. Flexibility and faster response times to emerging diseases is critical to the safety and well-being of the livestock industry.

We further encourage Congress to ensure adequate funding for the Animal Disease Center and Veterinary Services Laboratory. Research and programs for disease control are critical in maintaining a protected, healthy livestock industry; thus, assuring a safe, abundant food supply.

Animal Welfare (Partial)

Livestock producers continually strive to keep their animals healthy through robust biosecurity, vaccination, and treatment programs. We support the advancement of properly researched and industry-tested animal health technologies to enable farmers to improve the care and management of their livestock and combat emerging diseases.

American Farm Bureau
302 / Animal Health Emergency Management Preparedness (Partial)

1. Animal disease has a negative impact on food safety and the nation's livestock industry, which is fundamental to international trade.

2. Adequate USDA animal health facilities are critical to maintaining our world-class research on both foreign and domestic diseases. The United States should use every means necessary to ensure that these diseases do not reach U.S. soil.

4. We recommend additional research for developing diagnostics and vaccines, (including mRNA, novel and emerging vaccine development) to understand the biology of organisms and determining why diseases emerge. We and the international community must give priority to other emerging infectious diseases such as African Swine Fever, foot-and-mouth disease (FMD), Exotic Newcastle Disease, West Nile Virus, vesicular stomatitis, bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE), classic swine fever, porcine epidemic diarrhea virus, pseudorabies, tuberculosis, salmonella, E. coli, scrapies, avian influenza, and contagious equine metritis.

6. We support:
    6.3. The development and continued support of a coordinated animal disease surveillance control and eradication program to prevent the introduction of foreign or emerging animal diseases, poultry disease or pests into this country and to control and eradicate those that exist;

    6.6. Cooperative efforts, between government and industry, at the international, national, state, and local levels in crafting this management system, such as the National Animal Health Emergency Management system. Components of this system include prevention, preparedness, response and recovery;

    6.13. Increased surveillance and preparedness for foreign animal diseases, including increased biosecurity inspections at all points of entry and increased funding for additional security;

307 / Livestock and Poultry Health (Partial)

10. We support:

    10.21. APHIS carefully evaluating international restrictions on animals and especially on products to assure that such restrictions are science-based;

    10.29. Compartmentalization and secure food plans to protect movement and exports in livestock and poultry industries during disease incidents;

    10.32. Funding for additional U.S. Customs and Border Protection and USDA APHIS inspectors to prevent the importation of animal and plant diseases;

15. Cattle

    15.1.5. (We support:) Research and eventual eradication of the screw worm.

Trade and Tariff Authority

Key Takeaways

- Congress is currently considering legislation which seeks to reassert their constitutional authority over U.S. trade policy, specifically regarding the imposition of tariffs.
- American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) is seeking member input on policy related to trade and tariff authority. As a result, Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation (TFBF) is requesting review and guidance on state policy regarding trade and tariffs.

Questions

1. Should the President have unilateral authority to implement tariffs?
2. Does TFBF/AFBF need more explicit policy on what branch of the government has jurisdiction over tariffs?
3. What does a check and balance system between the legislative and executive branch look like when making decisions on tariffs?

Background

The Trade Review Act of 2025, S. 1272 and the companion, H.R. 2665 seeks to reassert Congress' constitutional authority over U.S. trade policy, specifically regarding the imposition of tariffs. The bill would require the executive branch to obtain congressional approval for new tariffs or increases in existing tariffs. Scan the QR to read S. 1272.

Sponsors of the legislation argue Congress has historically delegated much of its constitutional authority to regulate interstate and foreign commerce to the executive branch. The intentions of the proposed legislation are to provide a "check" on the executive branch's ability to unilaterally impose tariffs, ensuring trade policy is more transparent and subject to greater scrutiny. Some elected officials have raised concerns regarding the presidential use of tariffs can lead to increased costs for American businesses and consumers, harm international trade relationships, and create economic uncertainty.

Provisions of the bill include mandating the President notifies Congress within 48 hours of imposing *or* increasing a tariff. Congress must then approve the tariff within 60 days via a joint resolution. If Congress does not approve the tariff within the 60-day period, the tariff expires. Furthermore, Congress would retain

Read S. 1272 to learn more:

the authority to end any tariff at any time by passing a resolution of disapproval. This bill does *not* apply to antidumping or countervailing duties.

Potential Impacts

It is perceived the bill could impact prices, trade flows, and economic growth while also risking the alteration of the dynamics of current and potential future U.S. trade relations with other countries. Additionally, shifting more power to Congress reduces the authority the President has over trade policy. Overall, the impact of the bill would vary across different industries, including agriculture, depending on their reliance on imports and exports, and their vulnerability to tariffs. Over time, agriculture has proven to be an industry which often dramatically feels the impact of trade disputes and tariffs; thus, it's expected any action taken by this legislation would impact decisions made on and off the farm regarding marketing of goods.

What Proponents Have to Say

Supporters of the legislation claim the effort restores Congress' constitutional role in trade policy and could lead to more predictable and consistent trade policies. Proponents also claim providing a "check" on executive power prevents the executive branch from unilaterally enacting tariffs which could harm the economy. Requiring the executive branch to justify tariff decisions and allowing public debate also promotes transparency and accountability.

What Opponents Have to Say

Arguments against The Trade Review Act claim the legislation hinders executive action and could limit the President's ability to respond quickly to unfair trade practices or matters of national security. The 60-day window of approval could also create uncertainty for businesses which rely on international trade and may lead to political gridlock which could make it more difficult to enact necessary trade measures. Opponents also warn of the potential risk for increased lobby efforts on matters of trade, saying increased lobby and special interest efforts could turn their attention to seek to influence congressional decisions on tariffs.

Tariffs have the potential to impact farmers' bottom line twice – not only do they end up paying more for inputs, but they also take the brunt of retaliatory tariffs. With over 20% of U.S. agricultural goods exported, tariffs can pose to be a significant consideration for a farmers' ability to turn a profit.

America's farmers lead the world in producing safe, sustainable food, fiber and fuel for consumers at home and abroad. Thus, agricultural trade is critical to our national economy and to the economic sustainability of family farms, but political and non-scientific trade barriers and tariffs restrict farmers' ability to compete in global markets. We rely on robust trade agreements to establish a level playing field for farmers to protect the jobs and businesses agriculture supports in the U.S.

Policy

Tennessee Farm Bureau
Foreign Trade (Partial)

The economic health of every nation depends upon mutually beneficial trade among countries. The U.S. must strengthen monetary and trade policies to promote fewer trade barriers between nations. Increasing international trade, especially in agricultural commodities, will benefit all of us.

Governments, organized labor, and others have restricted or boycotted the export of agricultural products. We oppose such restrictions on agricultural exports. Embargoes damage farmers' confidence in the government, make our foreign customers doubt our reliability, and force foreign buyers to secure supplies from other sources. Lost markets are difficult to regain. We oppose export curtailment by the Department of State for political purposes or Department of the Treasury for banking interests. Such actions cost both producers and consumers. We oppose actions that single out farm commodities as a tool to be used in international disputes.

Many imported items used in farm production are very important to farmers. Some are not available from domestic suppliers. Agricultural imports competing with products domestically produced or placing domestic markets in jeopardy should be dealt with through the U.S. International Trade Commission together with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Imported agricultural commodities and value-added products should meet the same sanitary and quality standards as domestic products and should be labeled by country of origin.

We urge our negotiators in World Trade Organization (WTO) talks to place agricultural issues at a higher priority. These negotiators should be reporting to Congress and Congress should judge if their efforts have been satisfactory or not.

We urge U.S. trade representatives and USDA to closely monitor and advise American farmers about opportunities that may be created or the possibilities of trade barriers or unfair trade policies in the world market.

Trade is essential to America’s economy. Ninety-six percent of the world’s population lives outside the U.S.. Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) for the president is crucial in assuring we obtain trade agreements quickly. TPA supplies U.S. trade negotiators with a vital tool in securing a level playing field for U.S. farmers and businesses. It also allows our trading partners to know Congress will vote yes or no on a trade agreement without amending parts of it and sending it back for renegotiation. Without that assurance, foreign governments would not negotiate in good faith and make their best and final offers. We support the continuation of TPA to allow the U.S. to continue aggressively knocking down foreign trade barriers.

America’s trade should be fair and honest between foreign markets. However, at the same time negotiations should be firmly in the best interest of United States’ businesses.

Farm Policy (Partial)

The effect of world market prices on domestic prices has a major impact on U.S. agriculture. Free access to world markets for agricultural products is essential to the health of our economy. Current efforts should be increased to achieve the expansion and growth of agricultural commodity markets, both domestic and international. We support aggressive efforts (such as Trade Promotion Authority) to obtain access to these markets. The value of the American dollar as related to other world currencies must be considered when striving to achieve a level playing field. Until a level playing field can be established, we support continued funding of various export incentive programs designed to price U.S. commodities more competitively in world markets.

American Farm Bureau
252 / International Trade (Partial)

1. We are strong advocates of fair and open world trade.

2. Aggressive efforts must be made at all levels to open new markets and expand existing markets for U.S. agricultural products.

6. We oppose:

    6.6 Tariffs and regulations that would limit supply or increase the prices of agricultural production inputs.

7. Trade Agreements

    7.2 We support the trade promotion authority (TPA) for the President of the United States

Transfer or Sale of Federal Lands

Key Takeaways

- American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) is seeking member input on policy related to the transfer or sale of federal lands to states or private entities.
- In several western states the government owns a majority of the lands.
- There was a provision in the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" which would allow the sale of public lands but was removed and not included in the final version of the bill.

Questions

1. AFBF has conflicting policy; we oppose the sale of some kinds of public lands but also support transfer and disposal. Should our policy be clarified regarding the sale and transfer of federal lands?
2. From your perspective, how should AFBF policy be clarified?
3. Do you support or oppose the sale of federally owned public lands?

Background

The United States federal government owns approximately 640 million acres, or 28% of the total U.S. land area. Agencies like the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) under the Department of the Interior manage about 245 million acres which are neither national parks nor military bases.

Congressional proposals and public comments from agency officials indicate there is potential for the government to sell some of these lands to generate revenue and reduce the national debt or budget deficit. This document seeks to clarify policy on this issue and its legal and policy implications for farmers and ranchers.

Arguments for Selling Federal Lands
Selling federal lands could generate substantial revenue, potentially reducing the national debt or funding other government programs. Private ownership often leads to more efficient land management and greater economic development, such as resource extraction, agriculture or real estate development. The federal government spends considerable sums managing these lands. Transferring ownership would eliminate these costs. Some argue transferring land to state or private ownership would allow for better management which reflects local needs and priorities.

Arguments Against Selling Federal Lands
Federal lands provide recreational opportunities, including hiking, camping, hunting and fishing, which could be lost if public access is restricted by a new landowner. Private development could harm sensitive ecosystems, wildlife habitats, and natural resources. Federal lands often protect areas of significant ecological, historical or cultural value. The sale of these lands could

lead to development which compromises these values. One-time revenue gains from land sales may be offset by the loss of long-term economic benefits derived from public lands, such as tourism and recreation. Many federal lands hold historical and cultural significance for Native American tribes and other groups. Depending on who owns and manages the land, current activities on federal lands like timber harvesting or grazing could be impacted.

Legal and Policy Considerations
Numerous federal laws govern the management and disposal of federal lands, including the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. Many Western states entered into agreements with the federal government upon statehood, where the federal government retained ownership of large land tracts.

The Property Clause of the U.S. Constitution gives Congress the power to dispose of federal lands. Different categories of federal lands exist, including national parks, national forests, BLM lands and wildlife refuges, each with its own management mandate.

There was a proposed provision in the "One Big Beautiful Bill Act" which would have allowed the federal government to sell public lands, but this has since been removed. Proponents of this provision believe the federal government owns too much land which is hindering the growth of western states. Ultimately, this provision was not in the finial version of the bill which was signed by President Trump on July 4, 2025

Policy

American Farm Bureau
510 / Federal Lands (Partial)

1. With regard to general management policies, we support:

    1.20. The federal government honoring the state enabling act and releasing public lands. The revenue generated from the sales of public lands should be used to reduce the national debt, fund education and transportation infrastructure.

516 / Transfer of Federal Lands (Partial)

1. We support the following guidelines:

    1.1. The transfer of public lands from federal land management to state and local governments, including privatization. Lands transferred to state and local control should be administered under multiple-use management;

    1.2. Any loss of valid existing property rights must be justly compensated;

    1.3. Due regard must be given to traditional rights of use;

    1.4. Dominant economic users should have right of first refusal;

1.5. After a refusal, the land under permit, as well as non-permitted federal lands, should be sold to the highest bidder, or disposed into private ownership by an alternate method;

1.6. Where permitted grazing lands contain commercial timber, timber will be sold to permittee at fair market value;

1.7. The capitalization into private base property values of attached grazing right values must be fairly and equitably recognized as prior partial payment of the permitted land;

1.8. Agricultural lands acquired through foreclosure by government lenders should not be transferred to other government agencies. All rights associated with these lands shall be conveyed to the purchaser and none retained by the seller;

1.9. The funds received from the disposition of federal lands should be dedicated to retirement of the national debt;

1.10. The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) should trade or sell land with the current lessee when so requested. This should be done to block up land where current lessee has a checkerboard pattern of deeded land. Land trades should not erode the county tax base; and

1.11. Government agencies should lease development rights surrounding military facilities rather than purchasing the land

2. We oppose:

2.1. The policy of federal and state government agencies purchasing land from nonprofit organizations at a profit;

2.2. The eligibility for sale of federal lands:

2.2.1. Within the National Park System;

2.2.2. Within the National Wildlife Refuge System;

2.2.3. Indian trusts;

2.2.4. Wilderness areas;

2.2.5. Wild and scenic rivers;

2.2.6. National or historic trails;

2.2.7. National conservation areas;

2.2.8. Other congressionally designated areas; and

2.2.9. That contains lakes, which are environmentally or economically important to a state.

2.3. The transfer by deed or lease of any of the federal or state-owned lands to any foreign government or the United Nations.

Cryptocurrency

Key Takeaways:

- Cryptocurrency markets have been described as the "Wild West" of currency: regulation is minimal and there are considerable risks associated with the asset.
- American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) is seeking feedback on policy related to the use of cryptocurrency and how and whether it should be regulated.
- There is currently debate over whether the Commodities Futures Trading Commission or the Securities Exchange Commission should regulate cryptocurrencies and how - whether as securities or commodities.

Questions:

1. TFBF and AFBF policy both support coin and paper remaining legal tender. Should our policy address the existence or regulation of cryptocurrencies?
2. From your perspective, how should cryptocurrency be regulated?
3. How much regulation is necessary to protect investors and avoid risks to the larger economy and who should regulate it?

Background

A cryptocurrency is a substitute for money which relies on blockchain technology. Blockchain makes enough copies of a record change in enough places (the "distributed ledger") to make faking a change difficult.

Cryptocurrency is not the only use of blockchain. Blockchain can be a tool for ensuring the integrity of shared records and for automating escrow and contracting. Cryptocurrency is not required for these blockchain uses.

A cryptocurrency can be pegged to another asset, like a stablecoin (described later in the paper), and that asset may or may not be held to another asset. It can also be tied to the proof of completion of a math calculation, designed to be difficult enough to limit the growth in the supply of the cryptocurrency, like bitcoin, for example. If the cryptocurrency is not fully backed, its value is based on faith, without the backing of a government.

What is cryptocurrency used for?
Cryptocurrency can have contracting terms built into it to automate escrow or to allow for payment in other contingencies, although these uses can and usually are done with blockchain tools outside of cryptocurrency. Most commonly though, cryptocurrencies have been useful for anonymous transfers of value, which can have legitimate uses but can also be used to bypass financial reporting required by many government agencies for large transactions, tax avoidance, or to hide the gains of illegal activity.

Cryptocurrency markets have been described as the "Wild West" of currency: regulation is minimal and there are considerable risks associated with the asset. For the individual user/investor, cryptocurrency value can have huge swings, and because the assets are designed to be untraceable, there have been multiple cases of cryptocurrency exchanges being "hacked" and investor assets untraceably stolen. For the public, as cryptocurrency exchanges grow, they could become "too big to fail" and the government could be in a position of bailing out an inherently risky enterprise.

What is the issue?

There is currently debate over whether the Commodities Futures Trading Commission or the Securities Exchange Commission should regulate cryptocurrencies and how - whether as securities or commodities.

One example of Congress evaluating the extent of regulation needed for cryptocurrency focuses on stablecoins. A stablecoin is a digital currency pegged to a "stable" reserve asset, such as the U.S. dollar or gold. Stablecoins are commonly used for cross-border payments, costing significantly less per transaction than traditional remittances. In 2025 alone, over $700 billion in stablecoins have moved in more than 120 million transactions each month. However, there is no regulatory framework for these types of transactions.

To address this, Senator Bill Hagerty (R-TN) introduced the Guiding and Establishing National Innovation for U.S. Stablecoins (GENIUS) Act, which would regulate payment stablecoins and establish marketing standards for stablecoins, including 100% reserve backing with U.S. dollars and other liquid assets. The bill would also classify payment stablecoin issuers as financial institutions under the Bank Secrecy Act. The GENIUS Act passed out of the Senate in mid-June, gaining bipartisan support with a 68-30 vote.

Proponents of the GENIUS Act and its attempt to address the question of how to regulate cryptocurrencies see the benefits of protecting consumers and setting industry standards, making cryptocurrencies more trustworthy and mainstream for digital payments and other financial instruments. Critics say the legislation doesn't go far enough and leaves gaps in regulatory

There is currently debate over whether the Commodities Futures Trading Commission or the Securities Exchange Commission should regulate cryptocurrencies and how - whether as securities or commodities.

Learn more about the GENIUS Act:

protections and does not properly address concerns about conflicts of interest.

Policy

Tennessee Farm Bureau
Economic Policy (Partial)

We support the continued use of physical currency and recommend the U.S. government continue to produce a sufficient supply of coin and paper currency. Farm Bureau should monitor the emerging concept of cryptocurrencies. With any new technology, there are potential threats and opportunities for our economy.

American Farm Bureau
224 / Marketing Philosophy (Partial)

7. We support blockchain technology.

415 / Agricultural Credit (Partial)

4. Commercial Banks

4.1. We support:

4.1.6. Keeping coin and paper currency as our legal tender.

4.2. We oppose:

4.2.4. Moving to an all-digital financial system.

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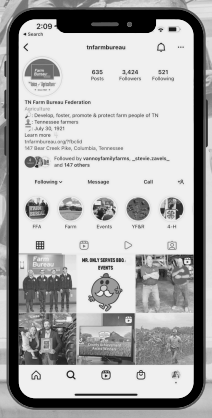

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