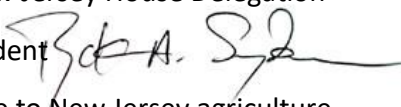




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July 27, 2022

To: members of the New Jersey House Delegation

From: Ryck Suydam, president 

Subject: issues of importance to New Jersey agriculture

On behalf of our farmer members throughout the state, we are looking forward to a productive period when Congress returns to session after the August recess. Listed below are several issues of importance to New Jersey Farm Bureau and our members. This information is intended to serve as background that will hopefully lead to a meeting and further discussion with some farmers from your district during the recess.

2023 Farm Bill – Title I Farm Bill programs are essential to provide a basic level of protection for farmers to help offset bad economic times and severe weather. Additional Farm Bill programs positively impact both farmers and consumers through soil and water conservation, ag research funding for Rutgers Agricultural Experiment Station and nutrition/food security assistance programs.

Climate Issues and Agriculture – Farm Bureau supports voluntary, incentive-based programs, market-driven opportunities, and science-based approaches to solving climate issues, like those found in the Growing Climate Solutions Act that the Senate overwhelmingly passed last year.

Ag Labor/Immigration Reform - NJFB supports comprehensive immigration reform including an improved H-2A agricultural guest worker program and an adequate transition provision for undocumented workers currently here in the U.S. E-verify, or any other verification system like it should not be implemented until other reforms are made.

Trade Policy - Farm Bureau holds the following general objectives in trade negotiations: include all agricultural products and policies in trade negotiations; eliminate non-tariff trade barriers; ensure market access for biotechnology products; address issues concerning import-sensitive products

Ag chemicals/pesticide registration – In order to protect public health, farmers rely on the process outlined in the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA). Farm Bureau opposes any legislation, including S. 3283, which completely ignores the science-based safety standards and oversight in FIFRA.

Estate Taxes/Capital Gains Taxes – These taxes are of special concern to our farmers, given the high property values in New Jersey. Farm Bureau believes the estate tax should be eliminated. In the absence of a complete elimination, we support making the current exemption levels permanent. Proposals to impose capital gains at death and to repeal stepped-up basis would be devastating to family farms, and we oppose any such measures.

Clean Water Rule/Waters of the US – The Navigable Waters Protection Rule (NWPR) was a clear, defensible rule that appropriately balanced the objective, goals, and policies of the Clean Water Act. Unfortunately, the EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers have proposed a WOTUS rulemaking that would repeal the NWPR and replace it with an updated version of the murky pre-2015 regulations.

Energy Policy - Farm Bureau supports a comprehensive energy policy to help alleviate the energy-related economic hardship being suffered by farmers by creating a more diverse energy supply, including renewable energy sources such as ethanol, biodiesel, biomass and wind. Farm Bureau also supports a comprehensive energy plan that also will increase the exploration and production of oil and gas here at home and reduce U.S. dependence on foreign energy sources.

We welcome the opportunity to have a call or meeting with you to discuss any of the above if you have an interest. We could also set up a farm visit in your district if your schedule allows. Please contact Liz Thompson of our staff with any questions, or to schedule any follow-up discussion.

Thank you for your consideration.

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Cc: Douglas Fisher, New Jersey Agriculture Secretary
David DeFrange, New Jersey State Board of Agriculture President