



Policy Resolutions :: Updated December 2015

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National Issues

FARM PROGRAMS AND POLICIES

- FP.1** The Texas Wheat Producers Association (TWPA) supports the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). We oppose any actions, which would reduce payments to farmers under existing contracts, such as budget reconciliation. Land use planning should not be a part of any program. Farmers should not lose crop production history on CRP acreage for the purposes of future farm programs. (r/2015)
- FP.2** The TWPA opposes restrictions on CRP acres that would prevent landowners from using the property for wind farms. Additionally, the TWPA supports wind farm generation with acreage only being reduced for usage of roads and wind towers. (m/2014)
- FP.3** The TWPA recognizes the erodibility index (EI) of 8 as a guideline for establishing CRP eligibility, but encourages flexibility to enroll land that does not meet EI 8 when environmental or economic benefits justify. We encourage more priority designation and more access to wind and water points in areas where applicable. (r/2015)
- FP.4** The TWPA supports establishing county bid caps on CRP that more accurately reflect fair market rental rate values, and include consideration of a producer's economic decision making process. (r/2015)
- FP.5** The TWPA opposes farm program payment limitations, including limitations on Loan Deficiency Payments (LDP). Additionally, TWPA opposes USDA being able to have automatic access to farmer's tax returns. (r/2014)
- FP.6** The TWPA opposes means testing as a method to determine eligibility to receive FSA program payments. (r/2015)
- FP.7** The TWPA supports the continuation and swift selection of the FSA committee system to implement and direct the administration of farm programs. Additionally, farmers should be given the option to vote on farmer-elected FSA committees whether they have Legislative Administration (LA) Districts or Single County Districts. Farmers should also be given the right to vote on each member of the committee. TWPA also supports the concept that all voting members of a county committee should be elected by county producers. (r/2015)
- FP.8** The TWPA urges the elimination of offsetting compliance for soil conservation programs on highly erodible land. (r/2015)
- FP.9** The TWPA encourages the production of consistently higher quality wheat; however, we oppose a national wheat variety registry that links government supports to variety selection and oppose the use of variety registries in other countries which harm U.S. exports. (m/2015)

- FP.10** The TWPA opposes Congressional action that would interfere with the ability of the Farm Credit System to continue to serve farmers and ranchers. This could include diminishing its status as a GSE or eliminating the Farm Credit Administration as the independent regulatory agency that oversees the safe and sound operation of the Farm Credit System. (m/2014)
- FP.11** The TWPA supports a comprehensive farm safety net which establishes equitable policies for farmers in Texas and across the U.S. Furthermore, the TWPA is supportive of providing farmers with sustainable policy options within Title I of the farm bill including, but not limited to, price and revenue-based policies so the individual producer can best manage the risk that is unique to their own growing region and crops. (r/2014)
- FP.12** The TWPA believes FSA should calculate all farm payments based on data from the county the farm is located in, not the administrative county for the farm. (n/2015)
- FP.13** The TWPA believes FSA and NRCS should coordinate to provide benefits through the Emergency Conservation Program in a timely manner. (n/2015)
- FP.14** The TWPA believes that producers should be eligible to hay or graze established grass in CRP every other year. (n/2015)

INSURANCE

- NI.1 The TWPA supports maintaining a strong crop insurance program as an important tool for farmers to manage risk. Federal premium cost sharing encourages participation and is critical to a successful program. Crop insurance should be a voluntary option available to all farmers and should not be tied to conservation compliance, an AGI means test, producer payments or any other farm program. (m/2014)
- NI.2 TWPA supports holding interest in abeyance on premiums until crop insurance claims are settled. (r/2015)
- NI.3 The TWPA urges that the crop insurance program issue new regulations that would recognize and approve generally approved cultural and seeding practices by regional areas. (r/2015)
- NI.4 The TWPA encourages RMA to require crop insurance companies to interpret and apply crop insurance rules and regulations in a uniform and timely manner. (r/2014)
- NI.5 The TWPA supports a grower option between the use of NASS and or RMA data in the determination of producer insurance or farm program payments. (r/2015)
- NI.6 TWPA encourages the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and Risk Management Agency (RMA) to continue working closely together on acreage reporting deadlines with continued farmer input. (r/2014)
- NI.7 TWPA supports a unified network programming system such as MIDAS which would allow the Farm Service Agency (FSA) and the Risk Management Agency (RMA) to access the same crop acreage reporting data. This would eliminate a double paper acreage filing system that results in errors so long as RMA, FSA and approved insurance providers all have access to the system. (m/2014)
- NI.8 TWPA encourages RMA to request additional or omitted information from producers within an acceptable time frame prior to administrative action or policy and claim denials. (2014)
- NI.9 The TWPA encourages RMA to implement new provisions and crop insurance programs in a timely manner that is consistent with all major crops. All new products and rules should be made available as mandated by current legislation or RMA should provide producers with compensation for lost indemnities. (2014)

FOREIGN TRADE ISSUES

- FT.1** The TWPA is opposed to any cargo preference provisions that would affect any commercial sales, blended credit or other export enhancement programs other than those already applying to direct aid programs. (r/2013)
- FT.2** The TWPA supports trade policies that give U.S. wheat equal access to markets in other countries to which U.S. gives that country's products when imported by the U.S. (r/2013)
- FT.3** The TWPA encourages increasing FAS funding to enhance foreign sales. (r/2013)
- FT.4** The TWPA supports the use of provisions of U.S. WTO proposals to develop and encourage trade by the elimination of unfair trading practices. TWPA supports US WTO negotiators in securing equal market access and free trade for wheat around the world. (m/2014)
- FT.5** The TWPA supports the use of Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) to approve trade agreements which develop, strengthen, and clarify rules that address practices which unfairly decrease U.S. market access opportunities or distort agricultural markets to the detriment of the U.S. These such practices include unfair or trade-distorting activities of state trading enterprises and other administrative mechanisms; unjustified restrictions or commercial requirements affecting new technologies including biotechnology; nonscientific sanitary or phytosanitary restrictions; and other technical barriers to trade and restrictive rules in the administration of tariff-rate quotas. (m/2015)
- FT.6** The TWPA opposes trade and travel restrictions on Cuba. (r/2013)
- FT.7** The TWPA opposes any reductions to U.S. domestic support programs and crop insurance in current and future trade negotiations. (m/2015)
- FT.8** The TWPA opposes any effort to re-direct a portion of Title I payments to market development programs. (m/2013)
- FT.9** The TWPA opposes any attempt in the WTO, or in any other venues, to require that food aid be given as "cash only" instead of allowing donor nations to provide food directly as emergency and development assistance. (r/2013)
- FT.10** The TWPA supports action to enforce all trade commitments and encourages the U.S. Trade Representative to pursue a case before the World Trade Organization (WTO) against any country currently in violation of its international trade commitments. (n/2015)
- FT.11** The TWPA supports developing a global wheat sectoral initiative that eliminates import tariffs, export restrictions, export and import quotas, export subsidies and export state trading enterprises. Such an initiative would promote the use of domestic support approaches that minimize trade distortion, similar to those in place in the U.S., and improve member transparency requirements that limit abuse in agricultural support programs and government policies affecting the wheat sector. (n/2015)

TAXES (NATIONAL LEVEL)

- NT.1 The TWPA supports a lifetime exemption on estate taxes and is opposed to any inheritance tax. TWPA urges the elimination of the Federal Estate Tax however, if changes are altered, the minimum set amount desired by TWPA is a 5 million dollar exemption and a 35% rate with indexing. TWPA supports an exemption for each spouse in the estate tax law. (r/2013)
- NT.2 The TWPA supports reinstatement of investment tax credit of 10% or more. (r/2013)
- NT.3 The TWPA urges the support of further reducing tax rate for capital gains. (r/2013)
- NT.4 The TWPA urges that the federal tax code be made permanent to allow capital purchases of up to \$500,000 (or greater) to be expensed rather than depreciated. (r/2013)
- NT.5 TWPA supports raising the minimum reporting level on Form 1099 and opposes any further expansion of current reporting requirements. (r/2013)

RESEARCH (NATIONAL LEVEL)

- NR.1 The TWPA supports and endorses the expanded efforts of the USDA/ARS U.S. Grain Marketing Research Laboratory to develop technologies needed to implement a total quality U.S. grain marketing system and would support additional permanent funds needed to be allocated to allow this research to progress on a more timely basis. (r/2013)
- NR.2 The TWPA supports continued research and development of wheat and other biomass crops for use in cellulosic ethanol or biofuels production. (r/2013)

OTHER NATIONAL ISSUES

- NO.1 The TWPA commends the National Association of Wheat Growers for its efforts to strengthen Political Action Committee (PAC) and encourages all wheat producers to make contributions. (r/2013)
- NO.2 The TWPA supports a responsible EPA pesticide regulation program to maintain public confidence in the safety of the nation's food supply, but which would not at the same time overly restrict availability and use of crop protection products. (m/2015)
- NO.3 The TWPA opposes legislation, which would involve the United States in any global warming treaty. (m/2014)
- NO.4 TWPA supports an expedited process through the Texas Seed and Plant Board to expand seed supplies in times of shortages. (2013)

- NO.5 The TWPA opposes any retaliation or ban on agricultural exports regarding Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO) which are not based on sound science. The TWPA urges the adoption of a nationally and internationally accepted definition of biotechnologically-derived products (GMO). The TWPA urges international harmonization of scientific standards and trade rules. (m/2013)
- NO.6 The TWPA encourages the continuation of research and development of genetically modified wheat. TWPA supports the responsible introduction of GM wheat into the market. (r/2013)
- NO.7 The TWPA opposes the consolidation of large agribusiness industries whereas it creates a monopolistic enterprise, which violates anti-trust laws and creates an environment that is detrimental to producers. (m/2013)
- NO.8 The TWPA supports and encourages USDA to promote and assist in installation of grain cleaners in the Gulf Port grain handling facilities. (m/2013)
- NO.9 The TWPA supports legislation that would repeal the Supreme Court decision in Massachusetts vs. EPA, which allows EPA to regulate greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, the TWPA opposes Climate Change legislation and or EPA regulation unless it is scientifically based and economically proven that agriculture and other industries would not be in a net loss position. The TWPA also opposes EPA regulation and or Climate Change legislation until there is a worldwide adopted greenhouse gas reduction system and it will not hinder the agricultural industry from being competitive on a global market basis. (r/2015)
- NO.10 The TWPA opposes mandatory labeling of food items which include genetically modified organisms. (2014)
- NO.11 TWPA supports voluntary conservation efforts to prevent species from being listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. TWPA believes that an economic analysis of agricultural impacts and all results and benefits derived from voluntary conservation efforts should be utilized in the final decision making process before a listing determination is made. All science-based material used to determine the listing status should be made publicly available for comment. (2014)
- NO.12 The TWPA proposes repeal of the current worker protection standards that apply to all types of agriculture and urges that EPA and TDA recognize that the exposure to pesticides by workers varies by a large degree according to the types of agriculture. Specific workable worker protection standards should be structured for each type of agriculture and/or commodity produced. (m/2015)

STATE ISSUES

WATER MANAGEMENT AND PROPERTY RIGHTS

- WPR.1 The TWPA supports the current state law that the land surface owner has the right of capture and that they maintain the right of capture with regards to water. TWPA recognizes and supports local water districts and their regulatory authority. (r/2013)
- WPR.2 The TWPA supports private property rights of producers. The producer should be compensated accordingly should any restrictions be imposed. (r/2013)
- WPR.3 The TWPA opposes the expansion of eminent domain to allow private companies to acquire private property. (r/2013)

RESEARCH (STATE LEVEL)

- SR.1 The TWPA supports adequate funding of the Texas A&M University System, Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension, and other universities doing wheat research, to meet their expanded responsibilities in order for producers to meet the challenges of changing farm markets. (m/2013)

TAXES (STATE LEVEL)

- ST.1 The TWPA supports the current state sales tax exemptions for all agricultural inputs. (r/2013)
- ST.2 The TWPA supports the current agricultural valuation systems for property taxes. (r/2013)
- ST.3 The TWPA supports an exemption on all farm fuels whether for on or off road usage. (r/2013)

OTHER STATEWIDE ISSUES

- SO.1 The TWPA urges the governor and members of the Texas legislature to ensure that all departments within the Texas Department of Agriculture are funded at the levels necessary to respond to the needs of agricultural producers within the state. (r/2015)
- SO.2 The TWPA supports the concept of a \$100 fee for truckers to permit an increase in gross vehicle weight to 100,000 pounds during harvest time. This would be only for field loading to the first point of delivery. (r/2013)
- SO.3 The TWPA supports the development and continuation of federal, state and county programs to control the population of feral hogs. (m/2014)
- SO.4 TWPA encourages TDA to alternate elevator auditors on a biennial basis in order to provide better transparency and clarity in a volatile market. (m/2014)
- SO.5 TWPA supports the concept of a Texas grain producer indemnity fund as a means of “self insurance” by a producer to mitigate their individual financial risk when selling or storing grain with a grain buyer as defined by Texas Administrative Code Title 4, Part 6. (m/2014)
- SO.6 The TWPA believes a Texas grain indemnity program should include:
- crop share or landowners as part of definition of a producer;
 - a set assessment range of 0.2 percent to 0.6 percent of the final sales price of the grain;
 - a set administrative fee;
 - a set maximum and minimum of fund balance;
 - proof of ownership as evidenced by a scale ticket or warehouse receipt, and
 - an optional method for producers to obtain refunds. (r/2014)
- SO.7 The TWPA supports state law that strongly protects producers’ financial interest in agricultural commodities they produce. This includes the creation of superior liens that give the original owner of the commodity first priority for payment in bankruptcy settlements or in other litigation. (n/2015)