AAW heading to Washington, D.C., to deliver ag policy positions

American Agri-Women recently drafted resolutions to address issues and threats to agriculture at the annual Midyear meeting March 30-April 1.

Representatives from this all-volunteer coalition of more than 50,000 farm, ranch, and agri business women will deliver these resolutions to elected officials in Washington, D.C., June 4-7.

The group’s resolutions, which are reviewed each spring, cover ag business and economics, commodities, and natural resources.

“It’s our mission – and our duty – to represent and protect those who produce food, feed, fiber and fuel for the world,” said Karen Yost of Billings, Montana, AAW president. “Our meetings are also an important way we educate legislators and policy-makers.”

Members also heard from ag experts at the meeting, which was held at Lied Lodge, in Nebraska City, Nebraska.

• Nebraska Senator Mike Johanns, former Secretary of Agriculture, addressed the 2012 Farm Bill.
• Gary Sides, cattle nutritionist, Pfizer Animal Health, addressed misconceptions regarding beef nutrition and production.
• Damien Schiff, senior staff attorney from the Pacific Legal Foundation, spoke as lead attorney in Sackett v. United States Environmental Protection Agency, which concerns whether Clean Water Act compliance orders can ever be judicially reviewable.
• A panel of animal ag experts answered questions regarding threats to livestock owners and producers by HSUS. The panel included Mindy Patterson from the Cavalry Group; Andrea Hutchinson, Chain Land and Cattle Co., Canton, OK; Sarah Hubbard, Animal Agriculture Alliance; and Sue Wallis, Wallis Ranch, Recluse, Wyoming.
• Rick Sheehy, Lt. Governor of Nebraska, shared the gravity of the ‘pink slime’ claims sweeping the media, and the results of the recent news conference held in conjunction with the Governors of Kansas, Iowa and Texas, and the Lt. Governor of South Dakota.
• Melissa Keyes, University of Nebraska-Lincoln student and member of the Nebraska Agricultural Youth Institute, spoke on ag advocacy and the use of social media.
• Joe Gerstandt, diversity consultant, offered perspectives on how to bring authenticity and energy to your mission.

Vote for America’s Farmers Mom of the Year

Online voting is currently underway on www.AmericasFarmers.com to determine the national winner of Monsanto’s 2012 America’s Farmers Mom of the Year contest.

From a pool of nearly 1,000 worthy candidates, judges from American Agri-Women and Monsanto have selected five amazing farm moms from across the country as regional winners. Each regional winner was awarded a $5,000 cash prize from Monsanto. The regional winner receiving the most online votes by May 12 will win an additional $5,000 and the 2012 national America’s Farmers Mom of the Year title.

The regional winners are:
• Northwest Region: Danni Beer, Keldron, S.D.
• Southwest Region: Debbie Lyons-Blythe, White City, Kan.
• Midwest Region: Sherri Lynn Kannmacher, Martinsville, Ill.
• Northeast Region: Sarah Peterson, Niles, Mich.

Continued on page 15.
Dear AAW Members,

Our Midyear meeting in March in Nebraska City was fantastic. Our speakers did a great job of informing us of primary issues and inspiring us to “keep on keeping on!” (So many issues, so little time!) Thanks to all of you who devoted your time to making this meeting productive and informational! And to our speakers!

Melissa Keyes, a student at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, was a delight. Our animal rights panel set up by Mindy Patterson brought forth provoking discussion. Dr. Gary Sides, Cattle Nutrition Specialist; Joe Gerstandt, motivational thinker; and Damien Schiff, legal counsel for the Pacific Legal Foundation were attention-getting. Nebraska Senator Mike Johanns and Nebraska Lt Gov. Rick Sheehy exposed the foul play demonstrated by major news network reporters who all succumbed to the “My-Sensational-Story-Beats-Your-Sensational-Story” theory rather than actually reporting the truth about “Lean Finely Textured Beef” (LFTB), a safe beef product produced by Beef Products, Inc. In national newscasts that employed name-calling and unsubstantiated allegations, not one of the reporters actually contacted BPI for their response to learn the facts.

I would like to remind you of a good resource right at your fingertips—the AAW website. As a quick and thorough source of information for you about your organization, I encourage you to use it to promote communication on agricultural issues, provide teacher references, find organizational links and to forward information to women who may be interested in joining.

Log on to the committee and affiliate page reports and issue updates for your own information. If you have not yet used the AAW “Grass Roots Advocacy Center” (click on the Legislation tab) now is a good time to start. It will take you directly to our VoterVoice section where, with one click of the mouse, you will be able to send AAW alerts with your own comments directly to key people.

I have been privileged to visit with many Agri-Women in the past several weeks. In April, I attended Syngenta Leadership at Its Best Seminar in Minneapolis, along with Lisa Condon, AAW Vice President of Education, and sixteen of the most wonderful women you would ever want to meet. I can’t help but be inspired as I witness leadership skills bubbling up from within each of our members as their passion for agriculture emerges.

This program encourages us to develop a mutual respect and closer understanding of each other, as we also reach out to use our many talents to protect and promote agriculture. Thank you, Syngenta!

The Arkansas Women in Agriculture meeting I attended in Little Rock presented an excellent program on the Farm Bill. With several prominent ag leaders on the panel, including Arkansas U.S. Senator John Boozman, the question and answer session was emotionally charged and especially provoking. It reminded me that decisions made in government are far-reaching, directly affecting the lives and livelihoods of many people in many geographical areas and affecting a wide variety of crops, and that consequences need to be seriously considered.

Arkansas Women in Ag presents several platforms each year in various locations throughout the state to bring women in agriculture together for these informative discussions.

As Fly-In approaches, I see dealings happening in DC and throughout the country.

1. The progress of the Farm Bill seems to be rolling down the track sooner than expected, (not everyone is happy, but we will watch for the disagreements to be worked out among commodity and regional interests);
2. The Department of Labor has backed down (for now) on the proposed child regulations bringing relief (and wariness) to the entire ag community;
3. The Senate Transportation Bill S. 1813, (also known as MAP-21) contains a huge increase in funding for federal land and water purchases through the Land Water Conservation Fund.

President’s Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive Committee</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Karen Yost</td>
<td>2343 Shiloh Road Billings, MT 59106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st Vice President</td>
<td>Sue McCrum</td>
<td>PO Box 630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Mars Hill, ME 04758</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolutions &amp; Vital</td>
<td>Phone: 207-769-9317</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues</td>
<td><a href="mailto:firstvp@americanagriwomen.org">firstvp@americanagriwomen.org</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice</td>
<td>Abby Amick</td>
<td>23217 Illinois Creek Road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>W 5763 Prospect Road</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>Jody Elrod</td>
<td>PO Box 295 Robstown, TX 78380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past President</td>
<td>Peggy Clark</td>
<td>2274 E. Lytle Five Pts. Road Dayton, OH 45458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Lisa Condon</td>
<td>Phone: 620-271-2953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Jody Elrod</td>
<td><a href="mailto:communications@americanagriwomen.org">communications@americanagriwomen.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Sue McCrum</td>
<td>PO Box 630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past President</td>
<td>W 5763 Prospect Road</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Karen Yost</td>
<td>2103 Zeandale Road Manhattan, KS 66502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Peggy Clark</td>
<td>920-485-4329 <a href="mailto:education@americanagriwomen.org">education@americanagriwomen.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Past President</td>
<td>Abby Amick</td>
<td>207-769-9317 <a href="mailto:treasurer@americanagriwomen.org">treasurer@americanagriwomen.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAW Web Site</td>
<td>Jody Elrod</td>
<td>Phone: 620-271-2953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAW Email</td>
<td>Lisa Condon</td>
<td>Phone: 207-769-9317</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Voice is published in January, March, May, July and October by American Agri-Women as a service to members. Deadline is the 15th of the month before each issue is published. Articles and suggestions are always welcomed by:

Arlene Kovash, Editor
503-838-3512 kovasha@gmail.com

Abby Amick, VP Communications

Please send address changes to:
Carolyn Kleiber, Membership Database Chair carolyn@agpowerinc.net
AAWRC Adds New Scholarship to Program

By Ardath DeWall, Scholarship Chair

LEGACY KIDS SCHOLARSHIP AWARD

The American Agri-Women Resource Center is very pleased to accept a $2,000 donation from the Ron Grabowski family for a Legacy Kids Fly-In Scholarship Award to be given in memory of Trenna Grabowski, who passed away August, 2011. A $250 scholarship award will be given each year to one of the Legacy Kids to attend the AAW Washington D.C. Fly-In.

Trenna developed the Legacy Kids program to provide a vehicle for AAW members to share their enthusiasm and support of agriculture and AAW with young people, while encouraging the ultimate entry of 2nd and 3rd generation individuals into American Agri-Women. Application deadline is May 10.

GAIL MCPHERSON AAW FLY-IN SCHOLARSHIP

This scholarship is available to any AAW member to attend the annual AAW Fly-In held this year, June 4-7, 2012, in Washington D.C. The applicant may be any age, but cannot have attended a past Fly-In. Only one applicant per affiliate can be accepted. Two $400 scholarships will be given. Applications were due by April 15th, 2012.

DAUGHTERS OF AMERICAN AGRICULTURE SCHOLARSHIPS

Jean Ibendahl Scholarship (ages 18-23)
Sister Thomas More Bertels (ages 24+)

These two scholarships are available to any farm, ranch or agribusiness women or their daughters to pursue accredited courses in agricultural leadership, communications, rural sociology, medicine, or other courses directly related to agriculture. A 1,000 scholarship will be given for each age division. Applications must be received by June 1.

HELEN WHITMORE AAW CONVENTION SCHOLARSHIP

This scholarship is available to any AAW member to attend the annual AAW Convention, November 8-10, 2012, in Denver, Colorado. The applicant may be of any age, but cannot have attended a past Convention. Only one applicant per affiliate will be accepted. The scholarship is $400. Applications are due by August 15th.

All scholarship applications can be sent to:
Ardath DeWall
11841 N. Mt. Vernon Rd.
Shannon, IL. 61078

And the McPherson Fly-In Scholarship Winners Are . . .

The American Agri-Women Resource Center Board of Directors decided at the Midyear Meeting to select two scholarship applicants from several applications for the Gail McPherson Fly-In Scholarship.

The two winners are:
Carrie Hirmer, Texarkana, Arkansas and Susan Kruger, Zumbro Falls, Minnesota

Carrie has been involved in Arkansas Women in Agriculture since it was organized, serving as Treasurer, volunteer CEO/Project Director and conducting educational programs for women in agriculture. She has been very involved with the Annie’s Project and has written numerous grants.

Susan is the current President of Minnesota Agri-Women and founder of the southeast MN Chapter. She has served on advisory boards, PBS Farm Forum on Renewable Energy and MN AURI Energy Roundtable and is an accountant.

We welcome these AAW members to their first Washington D.C. Fly-In!

Karen
AAW Fly-In June 4-7, 2012
Registration Form

Name________________________________________

Address________________________________________ City_________ State___ Zip_________

Phone_________________________ Cell _______________________

E-mail________________________________________ Fax _______________________

*Date of Birth __________________________ *Social Security Number __________________________
(*We must have this information for security clearance at various agencies, including USDA)

Affiliate __________________________

Special interests and issues (legislative or regulatory) __________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

Senate and House Bills in which you are particularly interested __________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

Planned arrival date and time in DC_______________ Via (plane and airport, etc.)__________________

______ Do you want us to find you a roommate? __________________________

Special Needs __________________________

Comments and suggestions __________________________

Registration Fee: $150 cash or check (No partial registrations available.)

☐ Check enclosed: Make checks payable to AAW: $150.00

☐ Registrations paid with Pay Pal: $155.00

Mail form with payment to: AAW, c/o Peggy Clark, Treasurer, 2274 E Lytle Five Points Road, Dayton, OH 45458 or call 937.885.5965 • Fax form to 937.885.5942 • Email: treasurer@americanagriwomen.org

FYI: There will be tours hosted by AAW on Monday a.m. June 4th. Dress Code: International Standard Business Attire for meetings and reception: Tailored dresses; skirts with a blouse and jacket; comfortable shoes; business casual for evening tours.

Hotel reservations may be made by calling the Renaissance Washington, DC Downtown Hotel, 999 9th Street NW, Washington, DC, 20001-4427, (202) 898-9000 or 888.236.2427. Rooms are $239 + tax, with two double beds, non-smoking; this rate is available June 1 – June 8th. Free high-speed Internet access. Reservations must be received on or before Sunday, May 13, 2012. Ask for American Agri-Women ID: “agagrana”. Cancellation policy is 6 pm day before arrival. For additional questions please call: Karen Yost 406.794.0888.

(*We ask that you please use the AAW room block so that we are able to meet our minimum reservations.)

www.americanagriwomen.org
2012 American Agri-Women

Position Statements

AGRICULTURE BUSINESS
AND ECONOMICS

TAXATION

Capital Gains Tax on the Sale of Farmland
1. AAW supports broadening of the $250,000/$500,000 exemption available on the sale of a personal residence to apply to the sale of farmland. Farmers and ranchers can easily exceed the threshold in a year when their income spikes and when they liquidate their operations.

Health Insurance for Self-Employed Individuals
2. AAW applauds the acceleration of the deduction for health insurance for the self-employed at 100%. However, AAW supports moving the deduction from page one of Form 1040 where it is deductible for federal income tax only, to schedules F or C, where it is deductible for self-employment tax as well.

Estate & Gift Tax
3. In lieu of total elimination, AAW supports an individual exemption of $5 million to $10 million, indexed for inflation. AAW is concerned that the popular move to eliminate the estate tax carries with it a return to carry-over basis. *

*This would mean that farm heirs (as well as other heirs) would not get a stepped up basis for property they inherit, making property acquired via inheritance and later sold subject to very large capital gains taxes. While we do not object to the elimination of estate tax, we call for transparency in the ultimate product and a fair analysis of all related provisions. In lieu of total elimination, AAW supports an individual exemption of $5 million to $10 million, indexed for inflation.

Long-Term Security and Retirement
4. AAW supports legislation to encourage individuals to provide themselves with a guaranteed stream of income for life. Specifically, AAW supports a proposal that would create a tax incentive for lifetime payouts from individual annuities. It would allow individuals to exclude from taxation 50% of income received from an individual lifetime annuity, up to $20,000 annually.

Depreciation Recapture on Retirement
5. AAW supports a change in the depreciation recapture rules when farm and other business depreciable assets are sold on retirement or cessation of business. Currently the amount of depreciation taken on most assets is recaptured as ordinary income, thereby eliminating the benefit of a more favorable capital gains tax rate for most businesspersons who sell their business assets on retirement.

Special Exemptions for Depreciation
6. AAW supports special exemptions for purchases of machinery and equipment, land improvements, livestock, and buildings.

INSURANCE

Health Insurance, Prescription Drugs & Medicare
7. AAW supports legislation that allows associations to offer group health insurance plans to individual members and small businesses.
8. AAW supports legislation reflecting the concept that citizens of the United States should have access to the best medical service available. We believe this is best delivered by private enterprise.
9. AAW respects and supports continued medical research.
10. AAW supports health insurance and Medicare coverage with the right of Americans to legally purchase medications from the most economical source.
11. AAW supports Medicare payments to rural health professionals and facilities at the same level as their urban counterparts.
12. AAW supports a proposed change in Medicare to include paying for nutrition counseling for those over age 65 and the disabled population who suffer from chronic conditions (i.e. high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes).
13. AAW supports a health care system:
   • that increases competition in the form of voluntary purchasing alliances to help smaller employers and individuals buy insurance at a reasonable rate rather than in the form of government-mandated bureaucracies;
   • that employers with temporary or part-time employees will be exempt from legislation that would require them to pay for health care coverage.
   • within which decisions for specific testing and hospital stays should be determined by medical professionals.
   • that continues to develop and use paraprofessional programs in rural communities as well as programs to encourage doctors and nurses to locate in rural areas.

Long-Term Care Security
14. AAW supports continuation of government assistance in caring for the elderly who are truly without resources.
15. AAW, at the same time, supports legislation to encourage individuals to provide themselves with a guaranteed stream of income for life.
16. AAW supports an optional national regulator or Optional Federal Charter (OFC) for insurers that would create a uniform, consistent system that would remove barriers to consumer choice and offer consumers the same protections nationwide.

Crop Insurance
17. AAW supports crop insurance that:
   • provides coverage based on current crop history and is administered by the private sector,
   • provides affordably priced, adequate coverage, which is actuarially sound and voluntary, in all regions of the country
   • requires participation for eligibility in government crop disaster programs.
18. AAW supports crop insurance as a viable alternative within the Farm Program as a necessary SAFETY NET at an affordable cost to producers.
19. AAW supports the reinvestment of any savings from additional cuts to traditional budget baselines for existing farm safety nets of direct and counter cyclical payments be made in crop insurance to better meet the risk management needs of all U.S. producers. AAW recognizes that current proposed cuts to the budget

For more than 100 years, insurance has been regulated by the states, with each state having its own unique regulatory system. It is a cumbersome patchwork of laws and regulations characterized by delays and expenses that ultimately disadvantage consumers. Further, consumer safeguards vary and products available in one state may not be available in another.
baseline for farm safety net options are ill-timed.

20. AAW supports requiring crop insurance for only crop disaster programs and not for other federal agriculture programs. Participants should have the option to not participate in the crop insurance program and thus not be eligible to collect insurance or government disaster payments.

21. AAW supports the strict enforcement of crop insurance regulations with regard to abuse of the program. Producers should be held to the highest standards. Those who commit crop insurance fraud should be held accountable and fined at the maximum level.

LEGAL CONCERNS

22. AAW supports legislation which would create criminal and civil penalties for anyone secretly filming or participating in undercover investigations at agricultural facilities without the express permission of the owner of the property.

23. AAW supports the legislative process and due process for determining major agricultural policy.

24. AAW strongly opposes any federal agency mandating regulatory authority without going through the legislative process and due process.

25. AAW supports due consideration to agriculture viability and no net loss to rural lifestyle, local customs, cultures, and human capital that supplies sustainable agriculture.

26. AAW opposes any effort to amend and/or abolish the existing rules of the Electoral College. We oppose any compact or entity circumventing the Electoral College as it currently exists.

27. AAW supports the Open Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA) for all.

The EAJA was established by Congress to ensure that individuals, small businesses or public interest groups with limited financial capacity could seek judicial redress from unreasonable government actions. The Open Equal Access to Justice Act is intended to force transparency and accountability on the large bureaucracies of the federal government.

Human Capital: AAW defines human capital as education, knowledge, ability, experience, and personal competencies of individuals affecting economic value.

Agricultural Labor

AAW believes labor-intensive agriculture in the U.S., especially fruits and vegetables, livestock and poultry, greenhouse and nursery, dairy, grains, Christmas trees and timber face a dire labor crisis. Congress and several states have passed, or will pass, legislation mandating use of the federal E-Verify system for all employers. The US Government estimates that 50-70% of the current agricultural workforce lacks legal status. The costly and only legal temporary guest worker program (H-2A) provides less than 2% of the workforce, and is so badly broken as to be virtually unusable. If Congress passes mandatory E-Verify without including a workable program to provide the necessary seasonal/temporary labor needs unique to agriculture, and a sufficient transition period to allow current workers to be able to transition, domestic production of food and other labor intensive crops will increasingly move out of the U.S. Food is a strategic resource for the U.S., and the stability of our domestically produced food supply and other agricultural industries is at risk now. The current H-2A program is unable to supply the volume of workers needed to support American food production.


29. AAW supports a guest worker program with a realistic admissions level that will be a legal channel for workers to enter the country.

30. AAW supports a workable employment verification system where workers can be verified. The E-Verify program is not workable in its current form.

31. AAW supports a legal channel for the experienced workforce that is feeding America and sustaining our industries.

32. AAW supports strong border security.

33. AAW supports a secret ballot as the way for workers to vote for union representation.

34. AAW supports youth working and learning in production agriculture without government agency intervention. Benefits derived include a work ethic, entrepreneurship, innovation, responsibility, and money management.

Sustainable Agriculture: AAW defines sustainable agriculture, including forestry, as using farm practices and resources that produce safe, high quality food and other products for America and the world; resulting in profitable operations that improve the land and environment for future generations.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE ISSUES

International Trade Negotiation and Policy

35. AAW supports the strict implementation of all international trading rules to prevent unfair practices by competing nations and to assure unrestricted access to domestic and world markets. Furthermore, we believe that all trade agreements should be continually evaluated.

36. AAW believes that imported foods should meet the same grading and safety standards as domestic products.

37. AAW supports equivalent sanitary and phytosanitary regulations as part of any free trade agreement.

38. AAW opposes the use of false trade barriers and punitive tariffs in trade negotiations and policy development.

39. AAW supports payment of the technology fee on biotech seed by all who use the seed—not just those in the United States. The requirement that this additional fee be paid on all biotech seed planted in the U.S. is a distinct trade disadvantage to U.S. farmers by increasing their cost of production.

40. AAW supports cooperative efforts for international market development and promotion programs.

Border & Port Inspections

41. AAW supports USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service having the responsibility for border and port inspections with the appropriate increase in funding. We believe that inspection of our food supply at the ports of entry should be increased.

Sanction Reform

42. AAW believes that unilateral sanctions have not proven to be an effective means to further foreign policy goals and are disruptive to international food trade.

International Organizations and Trade Agreements

43. AAW recognizes the World Trade Organization (WTO) as the primary international forum for world trade.

44. AAW encourages the U.S. Trade Representative and/or the WTO to review the developing nation status definition.

45. AAW supports further liberalization of trade in agricultural products, which can be achieved through the WTO.

46. AAW supports balanced, fair international trade agreements that open international markets to U.S. agricultural products.
DOMESTIC TRADE ISSUES

Transportation
47. AAW believes that all commercial vehicles operating within U.S. borders must meet uniform safety standards.

48. AAW supports Congress’ passage of a national increase of truck weight limits.

Two federally approved pilot programs in Maine and Wisconsin were successful in reducing fuel costs and labor costs for agriculture and natural resource industries.

Labeling
49. AAW supports Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) on all imported agriculture and aquaculture products at the final point of sale to consumers.

50. AAW recognizes food safety and traceability mechanisms; however, the added cost of implementation must not be borne solely by the producers.

51. AAW supports the position that it is unnecessary, confusing, and costly to the consumer to label biotechnological products or processes.

Market Consolidation
52. AAW supports strong congressional oversight of market consolidation. AAW believes that market consolidation restricts trade and decreases market access for small farmers.

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

AAW recognizes the potential of agritourism, value added and alternative crops whether for profit or education.

Telecommunications
53. AAW supports a full range of ownership of telecommunications infrastructure including entrepreneurs, large corporations, municipalities, and other units of local government.

54. AAW supports federal resources to build out fiber-based and wireless telecommunications for support of telehealth, electronic medical records and advancements in remote health care. Education and training are especially important in information technology and science-related fields.

55. AAW supports the Broadband for Americans Coalition, and urges that broadband be made both available and non-discriminatory/affordable (that is, comparably priced to broadband in urban and suburban markets) for all rural Americans.

Innovation
56. AAW supports policies and funding for the development of an innovative culture in rural America through transmission of land grant universities’ research discoveries into commercial ventures.

57. AAW supports efforts by non-profits and educational institutions to develop entrepreneurship in youth and adult populations.

Cooperatives
58. AAW supports the ability of farmers and ranchers to join together in cooperatively-structured enterprises, recognizing the importance of protecting and strengthening the ability of farmers and ranchers to join together in a cooperative effort. This effort includes cooperatively marketing their products, and acts as a bargaining agent which ensures access to competitive markets worldwide.

59. AAW supports initiatives that will ensure that the Farm Credit System remains a reliable and competitive source of credit for farmers, ranchers, agri-businesses, and agricultural cooperatives.

60. AAW supports the Agriculture Committees’ continued jurisdiction over the Farm Credit Systems and regulatory oversight by the Farm Credit Administration.

Access to Capital
61. AAW supports lending policies that recognize the unique lending environment of rural areas.

Rural Hospitals
62. AAW supports continued appropriation of federal funds to keep rural hospitals operational and modern.

63. AAW supports Medicare funding for rural health services if Medicare funding or provisions for medicare funding declines.

Rural Post Offices
64. AAW opposes the closure of rural post offices and facilities that provide rural mail distribution. AAW supports USPS privatization as a possible solution.

GLOBAL ISSUES

65. AAW recognizes the need for an international forum for countries to discuss their differences and cooperate on problems of common concern.

66. AAW opposes the U.S. government granting any authority to the United Nations regarding the use or management of any federal, state, or private properties of the United States.

67. AAW opposes the U.S. government granting any taxing authority to the United Nations.

68. AAW supports the concept that the U.S., not the U.N., establish the criteria to be met by developing nations prior to receiving U.S. food aid.

We support giving “food” in food aid rather than dollars. We recognize that the U.S. needs to provide a steady level of food aid, every year, on which the international humanitarian community can rely.

U.S. lands are owned by people of the United States of America and were never intended to use for barter. Every effort should be made to re-instate those holdings that have been transferred.

69. AAW opposes the reauthorization of any designated biosphere reserves within the U.S. or its holdings and any new designation of reserves in the future.

70. AAW opposes the use of U.S. land holdings for barter of U.S. debts to foreign nations.

71. AAW recognizes the need for international self-reliant farm programs for developing and/or war-torn countries.

72. AAW opposes any legislation, such as Cap and Trade and clean energy bills, putting U.S. agriculture at a competitive disadvantage with other countries.

73. AAW asserts that any new U.S. climate change policy must deliver environmental progress without harming the economy or U.S. food production.

COMMODITIES

A domestic food, fuel, and fiber supply must be the basis of our national security.

AAW recognizes that U.S. farmers and ranchers continue to provide a safe and abundant food supply in a healthy environment.

The future well being of the world depends upon modern, progressive production capabilities and practices of U.S. agriculture.

74. AAW supports the use and protection of existing and new seed technology for food, feed and fiber to advance a higher economic benefit and to assure an abundant and secure domestic and global food supply.

75. AAW demands the retention and continued development of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. AAW believes the USDA is imperative for the continued...
DAIRY AND LIVESTOCK
80. AAW supports programs financed by producer and processor investment that increase demand for US Dairy and livestock products both in the United States and around the world.
81. AAW supports creating a new and/ or revised Dairy Production Margin Protection Program to protect against both severe and unsustainable loss of margin.
82. AAW supports the use of the latest technological tools to meet increased global demand for meat, milk and eggs.
83. AAW supports availability of new products to safeguard the health of animals.
84. AAW supports the responsible use of antibiotics and other industry approved treatments to safeguard animal health.
85. AAW supports an enhanced infectious disease monitoring and testing program of imported and domestic animals and meat in order to maintain consumer confidence and market stability.
86. AAW opposes announcements of suspect cases of infectious zoonotic diseases.
87. AAW supports timely announcements of confirmed cases of infectious and zoonotic diseases.
88. AAW supports interstate shipment of meat from state-inspected processing plants where state regulations are equal to or exceed federal regulations.
89. AAW urges the USDA to work with state and federal animal health officials to identify all animals imported into the United States.
90. AAW recommends that any federally mandated surveillance and food safety programs be accompanied with adequate federal funding.
91. AAW supports research and education into standards of care that ensure animal well-being and profitable ways to raise livestock set by marketing demands. This should require the use of peer-reviewed research-based science.
92. AAW supports mandatory Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) to promote consumption of U.S. products.
93. AAW urges Congress to promote policy and regulations that encourage flexibility by the livestock industry to make responsible management decisions on breeding, disease surveillance, marketing, environmental conditions, and other issues that affect the livestock industry and the welfare of animals.
94. AAW supports an effective track and trace system that is cost effective to producers and enhances public confidence in the U.S. food supply.
95. AAW supports legislation to clarify that Congress did not intend to regulate manure under the Comprehensive Environmental Recovery Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) or the Environmental Protection and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), known as Superfund laws.
96. AAW requests a complete audit of the Beef Checkoff as well as complete transparency in the future.
97. AAW opposes feedlot ownership by beef packers, creating a monopoly without competition, in violation of the original 1929 Packers and Stockyards Act.

GRAINS
98. AAW supports and promotes alternative uses of all grain and related by-products produced in the United States. We support a national energy policy that includes a renewable fuels standard (RFS) for all transportation fuels and less dependence upon foreign oil.
99. AAW encourages a coalition of feed, grain, and livestock organizations to assure a unified voice for agriculture.
100. AAW supports a farm bill that better enables producers to manage risk which is effective and efficient.
101. AAW supports enforcement of limitations on foreign material in grains exported to foreign countries, including all levels of handling from the farms to the country of destination.

FRUITS & VEGETABLES
102. AAW supports the U.S. Department of Agriculture for increasing fruits and vegetable consumption in federal food programs.
103. AAW supports the continued education for the consumption of U.S. grown produce which provides tremendous health and economic benefits to both consumers and growers.

SPECIALTY CROPS
104. AAW recognizes and supports a diverse specialty crop industry, which includes edible and non-edible crops.
105. AAW supports the U.S. Trade Representative establishing a position for specialty crop trade matters in the agricultural office.

LANDSCAPING, NURSERIES, GREENHOUSES
106. AAW supports the development of industry-driven, science-based, voluntary, Best-Management Practices (BMPs), including but not limited to, cost-share programs and other incentives that assist nurseries in meeting water quality standards and other environmental goals.
107. AAW supports continued research and development of biological, physical, cultural and chemical tools necessary for nursery growers and landscape maintenance professionals to incorporate Integrated Pest Management (IPMs) strategies into their overall management regimens.
108. AAW insists that the scientific foundation and biological integrity of Quarantine–37 must never be compromised. It is a scientifically sound, biologically based barrier designed to minimize the introduction of new, damaging, exotic pests and diseases into the U.S.

POLINATORS
109. AAW supports rebuilding viable and vibrant pollinator communities, through continued research across all lands to improve resiliency and functional redundancy in pollinator populations, and to improve long-term profitability of agriculture. Pollinators are vital to production agriculture.

Most fruit, vegetable, forage and seed crops, plus crops that provide fiber, drugs and fuel require the pollution services provided by managed and native or “wild” pollinators.
LAND USE

119. AAW supports the preservation of our nation’s sovereignty and our Constitution as the supreme law of the land.

120. AAW believes that good stewardship of our natural resources is best assured by those who have made both financial and labor investments to become owners and caretakers of their land.*

*Even though local, state and federal governments own more than 40% of the land in the United States, some groups seek additional purchases of private property by, or through, the government. The continued purchase and taking of private property by the government or government funded organizations, using government funds, erode the very foundation on which this country, its principles, freedoms, economy, health and productivity of its natural resources are based.

121. AAW recognizes that a family farm, ranch, or private timber concern is a form of business enterprise in which the entrepreneurial decisions are made by individuals engaged in the production of food, feed, fiber, fuel, forest products and/or flora for profit, which provides a major source of income and capital for investment.

122. AAW opposes the elimination of productive agriculture lands to constructed artificial wetland.

123. AAW opposes any authority given to non-governmental organizations (NGOs), United Nations or foreign governments regarding the use or management of any federal, state or private properties within the boundaries of the U.S. and its holdings.

124. AAW opposes the designation of scenic byways, byways, waterways or any other designations and the resulting restrictions on private lands in the U.S.

PUBLIC LAND & ANIMAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

117. AAW expects government to comply with the same standards imposed on citizens and businesses regarding the management of natural resources and wildlife.

118. AAW supports active, responsible management of wildlife.

Wildlife overpopulation, overgrazing, polluted streams, passing of disease from infected animals and extensive crop damages are but a few intolerable consequences of wildlife mismanagement.

119. AAW supports promoting pollinators through further revisions to USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) field office technical guides and conservation practices.

NEW CROPS/NEW USES

111. AAW supports research efforts into the utilization of alternate/new crops for commercial food, fiber, and energy uses.

112. AAW supports funding of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to support research on plant-based feeds necessary to develop the regulatory structure for an offshore aquaculture industry in the U.S.

NATURAL RESOURCES

AAW defines “sustainable agriculture,” including silviculture, as using farm practices and resources that produce safe, high quality food and other products for America and the world, resulting in profitable operations that improve the land and environment for future generations.

113. AAW supports the multiple use of natural resources.

114. AAW recommends policies that promote the abundant renewable natural resources in a healthy, productive environment.

115. AAW supports the use of natural resources to produce food, clothing, shelter, and fuel as a priority for America’s economy and national security.

116. AAW believes that government agencies that are using decision-making powers to affect natural resource communities and industries need to be held accountable for their decisions. There should be:
- specific timetables,
- timely efficiency reports,
- analysis of public and private costs of implementation,
- balancing of harms and benefits,
- analysis of the effect of no-management actions.

PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

131. AAW supports legislation that reinforces our citizens’ constitutional private property rights that requires just and complete compensation at highest and best use for the taking of private property.

132. AAW opposes Agenda 21 and “takings” legislation that devalues land by:
- regulatory action,
- activities that negatively impact adjacent land by creating buffer zones, scenic byways, scenic viewsheds, and scenic vistas, or
- activities that impact landowner’s rights in any way, or
- by endorsing conservation easements.

AAW contends that water is property [the Hague vs. United States Takings case, January 26, 2004]. Any reallocation of the water permitted for private use by government is a taking. Government is obligated to compensate the owners of privately held water at the highest and best use of the property when the public deems a necessary beneficial use of that water.

133. AAW strongly supports private property owners and the sovereignty of states
above the federal government regarding allocations of water within their borders.

134. AAW urges Congress to take no action outside those enumerated powers found in Article 1, Section 8, of the United States Constitution that would infringe upon the rights left to the states and to the people. Article 1, Section 8, enumerates these rights, which are limited.

135. AAW opposes the right to trespass onto private property by land or water access.

**Eminent Domain**

136. AAW opposes the use of Eminent Domain for the purchase of private property from an owner to transfer or lease to another private or commercial owner.

137. AAW supports compensation at highest and best use when property is taken.

138. AAW opposes the use of Eminent Domain for economic development and additional tax revenue accruing from such development

139. When Eminent Domain is used for public welfare or safety, AAW opposes the government acquiring more land than necessary for the project.

140. AAW strongly opposes the taking of private property by postings on the Internet or proper notification only.

141. AAW supports every effort to use existing public land before imposing Eminent Domain.

142. AAW opposes the taking of private property by eminent domain to construct the planned NAFTA Transportation Corridor that will reach from Mexico to Canada.

143. AAW opposes the use of Eminent Domain by a foreign country.

**ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT**

*America’s security and economic solvency depend upon our military and domestic food and energy supply and must therefore take precedence over the regulations of the Endangered Species Act (ESA).*

144. AAW supports the value of human life, safety, and welfare above any other species whether endangered, threatened or not listed.

145. AAW supports the repeal of the existing Endangered Species Act. Funding for the Endangered Species Act (ESA) needs to be discontinued until such time as the Act is re-authorized and the means for funding re-evaluated.

146. AAW supports a requirement that the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Critical Habitat designations be completed before restrictive regulatory action is taken. Concurrent social, economic and environmental cost/benefit analyses and compensatory adjustments for takings deemed necessary for species protection is required.

147. AAW supports an ESA consultation process requiring the use of sound, verifiable, research-based science that is transparent, quantifiable, and assesses the economic impact to agriculture and natural resource production, giving equal weight to historical data of the land before a listing is approved.

148. AAW supports eliminating subjective biological units (sub-species, populations, stocks) from ESA action and pursue recovery of only significant species.

149. AAW supports the protection of property owners from regulatory takings by local, state and national agencies. If property is taken, owner must be compensated at highest and best use and for loss of income and expenses.

150. AAW supports allowing a state or private property owner who is accused of an ESA violation to continue with existing farming, logging, fishing or mining practices until the suit is resolved. No fine should be assessed unless a violation is proven.

151. AAW supports requiring feasible recovery plans and selection of recovery measures that are most cost effective and have the least negative social and economic impact.

152. AAW strongly supports accountability by reviewing and evaluating recovery plans every five years.

153. AAW supports allowing an administrative appeal of qualified major decisions and/or judicial review by directly affected parties.

154. AAW supports excluding a specie from consideration as endangered or threatened, or de-list it, if it is abundant in any location.

155. AAW urges that the EPA acknowledges “extinction” as a natural process of evolution.

156. AAW believes only native species should be considered for endangered species status.

157. AAW opposes expansion of habitat area designations for endangered species without peer-reviewed scientific data showing the additional acres are necessary.

158. AAW opposes the U.S. listing of endangered species in foreign countries.

Once listed, the ESA authorizes the U.S. Treasury to spend American taxpayer money acquiring foreign land, water, and other property interests to “protect” these species. As one way for America to spend money on foreign property, Congress and the federal bureaucracy have authorized several “Debt for Nature” swaps which allow the U.S. Treasury to forgive (“trade”) foreign debt or loans made by the American taxpayers to foreign countries with the hope that the country will stop property use and development to protect these species on the American endangered species list. Some of these “Debt for Nature” swaps include nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) like the Nature Conservancy or World Wildlife Fund buying the foreign debt to the U.S. for pennies on the dollar.

**Invasive Species**

*AAW does not view all non-native species as invasive, nuisance, noxious, or harmful. It is well known that migratory flyways can and do change. Weather, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes can and do cause variations to migration. Oceanic currents can and do cause variations to historic ranges of species. These and other acts of nature cause relocation of species.*

159. AAW believes the phrase, “invasive species” needs to be defined as a specific set of scientific criteria and this distinction needs to be made clear in open debate.

“Invasive species” means an alien species whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health. “Native species” means, with respect to a particular ecosystem, a species that, other than as a result of an introduction, historically occurred or currently occurs in that ecosystem.

**FORESTRY & TIMBER**

*Our nation has more forested acres and trees today than a hundred years ago. Natural and renewable, trees offer many benefits to our communities, nation, and world. Trees can provide goods, recreation, and wildlife habitats. They clean and cool the air we breathe and protect our water and fisheries. We have a moral obligation to make wise use of these resources and make sure these forests are standing tall for future generations to utilize and enjoy.*
160. AAW urges Congress to require the Forest Service to implement their National Forest Plans by:

- removing the excessive carbon emissions from the sick and burned acres they own,
- reducing the carbon emissions from public lands at the same rate expected of private enterprises and businesses,
- reducing the risk of catastrophic wildfires on our public lands and forests,
- increasing timber sale program to 3 billion board feet annually and continuing to increase until they achieve the Forest Plan levels.

Catastrophic wildfires take their toll in property and lives as well as air and water quality degradation and environmental devastation. Fire-fighting costs account for nearly 50% of the Forest Service’s annual budget. A study entitled “Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Four California Wildfires; Opportunities to Prevent and Reverse Environmental and Climate Impacts” authored by Dr. Thomas Bonnicksen, Professor Emeritus of Forest Science at Texas A & M University focused on four separate wildfires in California: the Angora Fire (2007), the Fountain Fire (1992), the Star Fire (2001), and the Moonlight Fire (2007). These fires burned 144,825 acres. The initial combustion had a carbon footprint equal to 1,864,624 passenger cars for one year. The most devastating wildfires, only 1% of all wildfires, consume 95% of all the burned acres and 85% of all the suppression costs.

50% of our nation’s forests are privately owned and more than 1/3 of these acres are part of a farm, an important part of the rural landscape.

161. AAW supports creating a separate fund to allow extraordinary wildfires to be treated the same as other natural disasters.

162. AAW urges Congress to release to multiple uses the acres that do not qualify for wilderness and settle the 40-year-old issue of roadless designation.

Wilderness Study Areas- Lands not actually designated yet as “wilderness” are being treated in a like manner, long after studies have shown these areas do not fit criteria for wilderness. These areas should be returned to multiple-use status, allowing roads and trails to be maintained for access, especially in the case of wildfire defense.

163. AAW opposes the sale of national forest lands to fund the purchase of more federal lands.

Our public national forests are sick and dying. Today’s public forests are growing 10 to 100 times more trees per acre than the forested lands at the time Native Americans managed them by fire. The overcrowded forests result in insect damage, disease, and the loss of groundwater. These unhealthy conditions make the forests vulnerable to catastrophic wildfires.

164. AAW urges legislation to offer cost sharing towards environmental quality incentives and tax incentives for developing renewable energy sources (including woody biomass), habitats, and/or water improvements.

165. AAW urges the expansion of the domestic forest products market.

166. AAW urges Congress to amend the Equal Access to Justice Act, Requiring a significant bond based on losses incurred by delays, limiting amounts awarded, and requiring plaintiffs to pay government’s attorneys’ fees if they lose would deter frivolous lawsuits.

WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Civil Works

167. AAW supports the maintenance and continued investment for development of dams, levees, canals and other engineered facilities that provide multiple benefits to people and nature.

168. AAW urges Congress to immediately reaffirm the initial, established purpose of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation. The purposes of flood control, navigation and irrigation projects have served both the government and the economic development efforts of this country.

169. AAW supports the funding and construction of new 1200-foot locks and maintenance of the existing 600-foot locks for the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers, and the Red River of the North.

170. AAW supports the implementation of a plan for systemic flood protection for the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers.

171. AAW opposes the use of Inland Waterways and Harbor Maintenance trust funds for operations and maintenance.

Trust funds should fund only new construction as intended when authorized. Flood control, irrigation, energy production and transportation should remain as primary purposes for public water storage and management investments. Fish and wildlife “protections” and other environmental concerns should be added using research to ensure that social-economic costs are justifiable with devaluation and/or harm to individuals, communities, or states being fully compensated.

172. AAW urges Congress to disallow immense public investments, such as dams, to be arbitrarily and capriciously destroyed. Prior to any purposeful alteration or destruction of these public investments or their uses, the government should show research-based scientific and economic proof that this action is vital to national security and necessary for benefit to humans as well as to the environment, as required under the original intent of the authority of the Corps of Engineers.

173. AAW advocates policies that promote abundance of water resources.

Navigable Waters

174. AAW strongly encourages retention of the word “navigable” in the Clean Water Act.

175. AAW opposes proposed changes to Clean Water Act that expand federal government’s jurisdiction over all intrastate waters including groundwater, ditches, culverts, pipe, desert washes, sheet flow, erosion features, farm and stock ponds and prior converted cropland.
Water Contracts, Water Rights and Ownership

A dedicated and secure water supply is critical to national and food security.

176. AAW urges Congress to honor its contractual obligations to agricultural water users throughout the West who rely on federally constructed water projects for irrigation supplies. Full contract supplies are essential to maintain the West’s productive farmland.

177. AAW does not support land retirement as a means of relieving the U.S. government’s contractual obligations to provide water and/or drainage service to the West.

178. AAW opposes foreign ownership of water and water treatment and distribution utilities.

179. AAW opposes federal purchase of privately held water rights in cases where the federal government would then hold the water right.

180. AAW supports a prominent role for agriculture in determining water allocation due to the economic and social necessity of producing enough food, fiber, and fuel to accommodate the domestic population and to build the economy by marketing value added and surplus commodity products.

181. AAW opposes the diversion of water from natural water sources to metropolitan areas at agriculture’s expense.

Wetlands

182. AAW objects to a national policy of avoiding impacts to wetlands, versus previous policy of minimizing impacts to wetlands.

183. AAW objects to public funds supporting easements or buyouts to non-profit groups for large-scale wetland restoration that removes agricultural land from local tax rolls and other local economic activity.

184. AAW supports the Supreme Court ruling that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers does not have jurisdiction over wetlands that are not adjacent to navigable waters.

WATER QUALITY

Livestock

185. AAW opposes efforts to regulate livestock manure as hazardous waste under Comprehensive Environment Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) or other environmental laws. We support legislation to clarify that manure was never intended to be regulated as hazardous waste.

Non-Point Source

186. AAW supports a national water quality policy on non-point source pollution that gives states the control to develop and manage water quality programs specific to the states’ own watershed issues.

Programs under the Clean Water Act should promote the use of voluntary Best Management Practices (BMPs) by rural landowners, agricultural producers and urban natural resources users.

Given flexibility within state programs, local watershed stakeholder committees can develop and implement Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) designed to incorporate BMPs and monitoring as key components to the protection of water resources and the prevention of future impairments.

187. AAW supports revising water quality standards based on real risk to human health as determined by research-based scientific methods.

188. AAW urges Congress to clarify that access roads on federal lands are not a point source pollution.

Data and Monitoring

189. AAW strongly promotes funding the monitoring of targeted waterways and the collection of data for accurate decision-making in the allocation of state resources for water protection programs.

190. AAW expects federal and state elected officials and agency staff decision-makers to use credible, current records on historical data to establish reasonable and attainable year-round water temperature standards for rivers and streams.

191. AAW supports cost/benefit analysis and adequate funding including risk assessments before state and federal regulations are imposed on communities.

192. AAW objects to nutrient trading proposals, projects, or experiments that are based on questionable science and unsustainable economics. Government resources should only fund such projects that do not cause adverse effects on adjacent lands, river systems, and communities.

ENERGY

A well-developed diverse domestic energy supply is critical to national security.

193. AAW supports the 25 X’25 Initiative of having 25% of the U.S. renewable energy sources being produced by farms, ranches, and forests by the year 2025.

194. AAW supports the use of alternative fuels, such as ethanol, biodiesel, wind energy, solar, compressed natural gas, and biomass fuels, because:
   • alternative fuels are an abundant renewable resource;
   • alternative fuels are important to our nation’s energy security, and;
   • alternative fuels are environmentally friendly.

195. AAW supports development of domestic oil, coal, wind, and compressed natural gas supplies on public and private land as well as offshore as long as international and domestic shipping lanes are not disrupted.

196. AAW supports the creation of new refineries and the continuous updating of existing refineries. Agriculture production and distribution is dependent on the oil industry.

197. AAW supports continued research of nuclear energy and development of new plants.

Biofuels

198. AAW supports biofuels programs to offer consumers alternative transportation as well as heating fuels and offer farmers additional markets.

PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING AND AWARENESS

ANIMAL WELL-BEING

199. AAW supports the responsible treatment of animals and livestock industry participation in the development of any new policy to regulate treatment practices.

200. AAW opposes any legislation or regulations that would allow Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), or any other anti-animal industry activists access to slaughterhouses and private animal handling facilities for any reason at any time. Only highly qualified and uniformly trained states’ department of agriculture employees should have access to properties for inspections at slaughterhouses or any other animal handling facility; that the animal processing industry by its very nature is vulnerable to attacks by animal rights groups.

201. AAW respectfully asks legislators, when they are approached by animal rights representatives to carry bills pertaining to animal health, to talk with actual livestock.
producers about the legislation in order to learn why producers use these practices for the well being of their animals.

202. AAW supports the responsible use of animals in research.

203. AAW supports legislation establishing strong federal criminal penalties and civil remedies for violent, threatening, obstructive, and destructive conduct that is intended to injure, intimidate, or interfere with animal enterprises and research.

204. AAW supports legislation that establishes assistance for security programs at research facilities.

205. AAW supports the right of farmers to protect their records from public scrutiny.

206. AAW supports the legalization of horse slaughter plants to guarantee the humane and environmentally sensitive disposition of aged and infirm horses in the US without onerous excessive regulations.

207. AAW supports the sale, possession and humane transportation of horses for processing across state and international borders without onerous excessive regulations.

208. AAW supports the use of standardized best management practices in livestock carcass disposal.

CLEAN AIR

209. AAW supports a clean air standard providing an agricultural exemption for dust particulate matter generated as a result of agricultural activities. Any definition including dust as a contaminant must exempt production agriculture and silviculture. Any increase in dust regulation must show proof of validated scientific justification for the increased regulation.

210. AAW supports research efforts to identify agriculture’s role in carbon sequestration. Carbon sequestration, the process by which carbon gases are captured and stored, presents potential technological solutions to the build-up of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

It is important that regulation of greenhouse gases (GHG) not adversely affect our ability to provide a safe and abundant food supply. AAW contends that while it is possible some producers might gain some benefits, it is far more certain that all producers would face higher costs. If U.S. trading partners do not adopt similar emission reduction strategies, it will severely erode the international competitive position of the U.S.

CROP PROTECTION

Pesticide Application and Runoff

211. AAW supports an amendment to the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), to replace the authority granted by the U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals to regulate pesticide use on or near waterways under the Clean Water Act. AAW urges Congress to clarify federal law that governs the use of resource management tools and resource protection.

212. AAW supports the continuation and the increase of the allowable exemptions to the methyl bromide phase-out under the Montreal Protocol and the U.S. Clean Air Act. This fumigant is a vital tool for U.S. producers for the viability of their crops and export fumigation uses for the stability of global agricultural markets.

213. AAW supports the re-registration of current fumigants and continued development of new fumigants for crop production and export opportunities.

Chemical Registration

214. AAW urges Congress to continue oversight of EPA in its review of Section 18, Section 24C and Crisis Exemption requests by the states, manufacturers and third parties.

215. AAW supports the development of a revised process by which biological opinions are derived under the U.S. Endangered Species Act (ESA). Under the current process, the reviewing federal departments do not give stakeholders adequate time to provide comments; do not provide all required information on which to comment; fail to address best available scientific data; do not provide basis for omitting available and highly relevant data and information; and, therefore, make incomplete or inaccurate assessments of a product and flawed evaluations of its effect on a listed species. Under ESA these departments consult with EPA which uses the biological opinion of a specific chemical as a basis for new labeled use restrictions having economic impact on the food supply and the producer while providing no additional protection for listed species.

216. AAW supports a USEPA review and determination of the maximum contaminant level (MCL) for atrazine that meets the drinking water levels of comparison. AAW supports a federal policy for the use of the best available scientific data/information in the decision-making process for regulating crop production tools.

217. AAW opposes a zero risk standard for spray drift. With today’s technology – and the ability to test parts per trillion – it is impossible to get to zero. The requirement should be that products be applied according to the label law.

218. AAW supports the policies that provide for producers to keep records onsite for chemical usage.

219. AAW supports dedicated IR-4 (Interregional Research Project No. 4) funding, a program to support the registration of crop management tools for minor crops. IR-4 coordinates financial and scientific resources of federal government, land grant universities, and the private sector to manage destructive pests that threaten food security, consumer prices and the public health.

FOOD SAFETY

220. AAW supports federal, state, and local activities to improve nutritional intake and establish healthy eating habits. Balancing information for consumer and schools recommending a daily diet of meats, dairy, fruits, whole grains and vegetables to support healthy living.

AAW, to address the obesity epidemic in the United States with a special emphasis on children, supports a call to action to improve nutrient intakes and establish healthy eating habits overall. There should be an emphasis in school programs to consume more nutrient-dense foods such as low-fat or fat-free milk and milk products, in addition to lean meats, fruits, vegetables and whole grains, while limiting intakes of sodium, solid fat, added sugars and refined grains.

221. AAW supports the value of the safe and affordable food supply for our nation and around the world. AAW supports a federal standard to maintain the US food supply while maintaining consumer food confidence in the safety of US agricultural products.

222. To insure the safety of our food supply, AAW supports:

- the implementation of animal health emergency management and eradication programs,
- traceability of all food products,
- Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP),
- continued worldwide surveillance activities,
- monitoring of the status of foreign and domestic animal diseases,
- inspections at the border to maintain a safe and abundant food supply for the American people and the world population.
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

223. AAW supports continued research and development of tools and techniques that would support the advancement of agricultural production and processes in the United States for the industry and the consumer.

224. AAW supports the management and utilization of baseline data supplied by producers through the certified farm business management educational program.

BIOTECHNOLOGY

225. AAW supports increased research and development of agricultural biotechnology providing producers a greater range of integrated pest management tools to promote sustainable production reducing energy consumption and associated environmental effects. Biotechnology offers environmental benefits by increasing production yields, using herbicide tolerant crops, enhancing soil moisture content, reducing erosion and limiting carbon dioxide emissions.

226. AAW supports the coordinated framework and extensive testing procedures of biotechnological products by the U.S. regulatory agencies (EPA, FDA, and USDA).

227. AAW supports the position that it is unnecessary, confusing and costly to the consumer to label biotechnological products or processes.

228. AAW supports the position that any Biosafety Protocol that is implemented should be based on risk assessments and research-based science.

229. AAW condemns the theft or destruction of agricultural research and intellectual property. Research has tremendous benefits to the farmer and the consumer. Genetically-enhanced products have the capability of improving human health, and solving world environmental and nutritional problems.

230. AAW stands behind long-standing APHIS regulatory noxious weed authority that evaluates genetically-engineered plants that are no different than any other plant using the defined criteria that a plant must cause direct harm or physical injury to a protected interest to be considered a noxious plant. Risk assessment should not be made based entirely on economic factors associated with the plant.

HOMELAND SECURITY

231. AAW condemns all forms of terrorism. As providers of this nation’s food and fiber supply, we recognize the need to increase our vigilance to protect the production of agriculture products (food, feed, fuel, fiber and flora and the inputs required for production).

232. AAW supports the Bioterrorism Act and efforts to educate producers about ways to safeguard our nation’s food and fiber supply and agricultural inputs from acts of terror.

233. AAW supports rural crime task forces in collaboration with local law enforcement for the prevention of rural and farm crime.

234. AAW urges states to identify homeland security funding to support activities to protect food production and its distribution.

EDUCATION

235. AAW believes in an educated public. Furthermore, agricultural education and education about our nation’s food and fiber system must be based on factual information and research-based science. We encourage agricultrists to work cooperatively on common issues through education.

236. AAW supports the intent of the Carl D. Perkins Act with increased funding for vocational (career and technical) agriculture education.

237. AAW supports a national Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) program with continued funding and support for a national director and the national conference.

238. AAW opposes any authority given to the United Nations or foreign governments regarding the education of America’s children.

239. AAW opposes using public education as a tool to indoctrinate America’s children (pre-school through university) to support any political agenda.

AAW member action needed now!

The U.S. Senate created a huge new Land Acquisition Trust Fund by amendment to Transportation Bill S. 1813, giving billions of dollars to the Federal land agencies with NO appropriations process! That means there is no oversight or accountability. It gives the Park Service, Forest Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and BLM a blank check to take private land. The Senate bill added $700 million to the already allocated $300 million annual budget of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for each year for two years (over $2 billion total). This is to be spent by federal agencies to buy more private land and convert it into government ownership. There is no Congressional appropriations process for this money in the LWCF fund and little or no oversight in spite of our country facing a huge deficit.

Now is the time to try voterVoice at AAW’s website! Your comments are crucial in removing this provision — go to the Grass Roots Advocacy Center under “Legislation” on the AAW website. There you can just personalize the sample letter and fill out the form and it will go out to the President, your Congressional Delegates, Secretary of Ag, and Secretary of Transportation — very fast.

Ask them to oppose any version of the Transportation Bill that has LWCF acquisition funding inside it. Make sure he or she understands that you will remember the vote on the LWCF Land Grab in November. Deadline is June 30.

What’s wrong with the LWCF Amendment to the Transportation Bill?

A. None of this money will be used to create jobs.

B. None of this money will be used to reduce the deficit.

C. It doubles funding for the LWCF adding $700 million for each of the next two years. It will be a threat to all private property owners and Rural America for many years.

D. NONE of the money can be used for land management and maintenance... so our forests will continue burning and our watersheds will be destroyed.

![START Chair Anna Morrison and Mary Ann Jansen, President of Nebraska Agri-Women, consult on changes to AAW policy at Midyear in Nebraska City, Neb., in March.](image)
News About Agriculture

The U.S. Food Supply is Safe

By Abby Amick, AAW Vice President of Communications

USDA and California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) announced the discovery of a case of bovine spongiform encephalopathy in California this week. BSE is a chronic, degenerative disease affecting the central nervous system of cattle. The case was detected in a dairy cow from central California that was not presented for human consumption.

CDFA Secretary Karen Ross issued this statement: “The detection of BSE shows that the surveillance program in place in California and around the country is working. Milk and beef remain safe to consume. The disease is not transmitted through milk. Because of the strength of the food protection system, the cow did not enter the food or feed supply. There are numerous safeguards in place to prevent BSE from entering the food chain. “The atypical BSE designation is important because this is a very rare form of BSE not generally associated with an animal consuming infected feed. CDFA veterinarians are working with the USDA to investigate this case and to identify whether additional cows are at risk. Feed restrictions in place in California and around the country for the last 15 years minimize that risk to the greatest degree possible. We will provide additional information about this case as it becomes available.”

USDA secretary, Tom Vilsack issued a similar statement: “The beef and dairy in the American food supply is safe and USDA remains confident in the health of U.S. cattle. The systems and safeguards in place to protect animal and human health worked as planned to identify this case quickly, and will ensure that it presents no risk to the food supply or to human health. USDA has no reason to believe that any other U.S. animals are currently affected, but we will remain vigilant and committed to the safeguards in place.”

• In this case, the type of BSE is what veterinarians call “atypical.” That means it is a form of the disease that does not relate to feed consumption;
• Meat from this animal did not enter the food supply;
• Milk does not transmit BSE;
• Feed Bans on mammalian-to-ruminant feed sources for cattle entering the food chain have been strictly enforced since 1997, with updated, stronger regulations approved in 2008;
• There have been no human deaths or sickness attributed to BSE in the United States;
• These precautions, and the concern and compliance by U.S. cattle producers, make the U.S. food supply the safest in the world.

“American Agri-Women continues to support safe food and safe feed regulations in the U.S.” states Karen Yost, president of AAW. “Any material that might transmit BSE is routinely removed from the food supply, and regulations prohibit processing methods that might transmit BSE. Meat from this particular animal did not enter the food supply. The food supply remains safe.”

CWA member Ruth Jensen Appointed to Commission

California Women for Agriculture member and United Agribusiness League, Business and Political Affairs specialist Ruth Jensen was appointed to the Santa Barbara County Ag Advisory Commission by Fifth District Board of Supervisor, Steve Lavagnino at the May 1st Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors meeting in Santa Barbara.

The purpose of the Committee is to provide advice to the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission and County departments on a variety of agriculturally-related matters, such as: land use, economics, pesticides, legislation, water, regulatory issues, property rights, agricultural practices, export trade and housing.

Ruth’s 30 plus years of experience and service to the agriculture community will be a real asset to the committee.

Mom of the Year, continued.

• Southeast Region: Delores “DeeDee” Clements Darden, Smithfield, Va.

A profile of each, along with her winning nomination, will remain posted on AmericasFarmers.com until May 12, the voting deadline. The national winner will be announced on Sunday, May 13 – Mother’s Day.

American Agri-Women evaluated nominations on how each farm mom nominee supports her farm, family, community and the agricultural industry.

“Despite the great geographic distance that separates our 2012 regional winners, they share a common passion for their families and the land, crops and animals they care for,” says Consuelo Madere, America’s Farmers Mom of the Year spokesperson. “Each is known in her community for putting a smiling face on agriculture and illustrating that the food on our grocery store shelves is grown by hard-working American farm families.”

Monsanto’s America’s Farmers Mom of the Year is an extension of the America’s Farmers program. Visit AmericasFarmers.com to vote for the 2012 national farm mom winner.

Ag Committee Announces Farm Bill DC Hearings

Chairman Frank Lucas announced another series of hearings on the 2012 Farm Bill to begin next week in Washington, D.C. The six subcommittees will hold the hearings throughout April and May to hear from national agricultural stakeholders advocating for policy priorities. It is the next step in the Farm Bill development.

Last June, Chairman Lucas began the effort when the Agriculture Committee held 11 audit hearings on agriculture programs to look for ways to improve programs for farmers, increase efficiency, and reduce spending. Chairman Lucas then took committee members to the countryside to hear directly from producers in the field. The hearings slated for Washington will round out the information gathering in advance of writing legislation.

See the AAW website for the full hearing schedule.
Fly-In is June 4th-7th in Washington, D.C.

Make your plans now to attend the AAW Fly-In on June 4th-7th.

We will have a full day on Monday for you, so make your flight for Sunday, if possible.

On Monday morning we will be visiting the Heritage Foundation (Heritage.org) and the Allan P. Kirby Center for Constitutional Studies (http://kirbycenter.hillsdale.edu/), then will be briefed on the AAW Positions and Policies at 3 p.m., with an evening event as a group.

We have an important agenda of Hill and agency visits throughout our week. We recommend that you schedule your Hill visits on Wednesday afternoon, with the Congressional Reception on Wednesday evening. If you have questions on any of this schedule, don’t hesitate to call AAW President Karen Yost, 406-860-8888, or StART Chair Anna Morrison, 541-991-6318.

We have booked rooms at the Renaissance Hotel, 999 9th Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20001. Phone 202-682-3410, fax 202-789-4213, or go online at www.renaissancehotels.com to make reservations. Ask for the American Agri-Women room block or code: AGRAGRA.

Watch the AAW website for an update on the issues we will take to Washington.

American Agri-Women
Calendar of Events

June 4-7, 2012
Fly-In, Washington, D.C.

June 30, 2012
Veritas Award Deadline

August 1, 2012
LEAVEN Award Deadline

August 15, 2012
Helen Whitmore Scholarship Applications Due

September 7, 2012
Resolutions Due

October 1, 2012
Annual Reports Due

November 8-10
AAW 2012 Convention, Marriott Renaissance Hotel Denver, Colorado

To see pictures from the AAW Midyear meeting in Nebraska, scan this QR Code on your smart phone to go to Flickr, where a set is available.