

National Farmers Union — 2007 Special Order of Business

Energy and Environmental Opportunities for Rural America

WHEREAS, today's resources of energy are becoming more diverse by the day; farmers and ranchers have become an even greater contributor to America's energy supply. NFU promotes the increased use of ethanol, biodiesel, animal fats, oilseeds, switchgrass, methane and other agriculturally derived products as alternative sources of fuel energy products to aid rural America in building an energy-independent nation; and

WHEREAS, for decades National Farmers Union has been the leader in finding and creating opportunities for renewable energy from the countryside, we continue to push for strengthening current technologies and industries, while helping usher in the next set of innovations in renewable energy.

WHEREAS, the onset of global warming has captured the attention of leaders across the world and agricultural producers have the capacity to sequester carbon dioxide through certain farming practices. National Farmers Union recognizes agriculture as a bridge to climate stabilization by 2050. National Farmers Union is an agricultural organization that is an aggregator of carbon credits on the Chicago Climate Exchange. This program financially compensates farmers and ranchers for utilizing sound conservation and stewardship practices.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the National Farmers Union supports these policies for the further expansion of renewable energy across rural America and creating additional financial opportunities for environmentally sound practices:

- Expanded research and development dollars for renewable energy technology. At all levels of government, a commitment is required to truly become energy independent, including full funding of renewable energy programs within the current and future farm bills.
- Expanding the Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS) to set a mandate for production of biofuels that make up one-third of the national's fuel supply as soon as possible. In addition, setting up separate mandates of production for each form of biofuel, including cellulosic ethanol and biodiesel.
- Establishment of a national Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) that requires 25 percent of our energy usage comes from renewable sources by 2025.
- Creation of a Strategic Biofuels Feedstock Reserve. Setting aside feedstocks for emergency needs is a sound energy and national security policy, as is allows for a reserve of processed biofuels in storage.
- Incentives for local ownership of renewable energy production in all forms. NFU suggest efforts similar to the Community-Based Energy Development (C-BED) ownership model in Minnesota.
- A program to tackle the lack of infrastructure in the expansion of renewable energy. We support many increases in research and development, particularly in the areas of:
 - Pipelines designated or alter for the transport of biofuels;
 - Solidifying the railroads in this country to move renewable fuels to each coast;
 - Expanded use of blender pumps;
 - Establishing E-85 filling stations/pumps; and
 - Expanding and creating a network of transmission lines throughout the country to aid in the movement of renewable energy from sources such as wind and solar.
- Extension and expansion of renewable energy tax credits, incentives and loan guarantee programs. These include a permanent renewable energy production tax credit (PTC), the biodiesel and ethanol blenders' tax credits and the cellulosic production loan guarantees. These measures should be targeted at local-ownership, extended well into the future and maintained for our domestic energy independence.
- Policies to create greater domestic production of biofuel plants and other renewable energy components, such as wind turbines and solar panels. All aspects of the renewable energy industry need to be available for U.S. energy producers.
- Dramatically expand the production of flex-fuel vehicles.
- Reducing, towards the goal of eliminating, the importation of foreign sources of renewable energy. This includes the extension of the ethanol import tariff indefinitely.
- Expanding and fully funding the biobased products initiative created in the 2002 farm bill; as well as ensuring the federal government is a leader in procuring these products.
- Support for a national mandatory carbon emission cap and trade system to reduce non-farm greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, the Chicago Climate Exchange should continue and expand to allow for the continuation of financially compensating farmers and ranchers for their environmentally sound practices.
- Support expanded energy conservation research and development as well as implementation of programs that encourage the conservation of energy inputs by the agricultural and food sectors.