

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE  
NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
from its July 21, 2021 meeting**

**1) Carbon Sequestration and Ecosystem Service Markets**

The Committee recommends creating a new MFB policy to specifically address carbon, greenhouse gas, and ecosystem service markets, to separate it from climate change policy:

New Policy #001: Carbon Sequestration and Ecosystem Service Markets

Ecosystem services markets are rapidly evolving. These would include carbon sequestration, phosphorus reduction, water conservation and others. Ecosystem services markets typically function with a financial exchange for outcomes (credits).

We support:

- Sound science and public research related to ecosystem services credits.
- Standardization, transparency and clarity related to ecosystem services enrollment contracts.
- Full recognition of agriculture and forestry's value to carbon sequestration. [Moved from #73, Lines 7-8]
- Compensation for farmers through USDA programs for farming practices that keep carbon in the soil or in plant material. [Moved from #73, Lines 9-11]
- Farm Bureau staff, MSU staff and others in their mission to support farmers as they navigate carbon sequestration/ecosystem services credits contracting.

The Committee recommends moving lines 7-11 from MFB Policy #73, Climate Change, to MFB New Policy #001, Carbon Sequestration and Ecosystem Services Markets:

We support:

- Research and investments to assist agriculture in adapting to climate variability.
- ~~Full recognition of agriculture and forestry's value to carbon sequestration.~~ [Moved to New #001, Lines XX-XX]
- ~~Compensation for farmers through USDA programs for farming practices that keep carbon in the soil or in plant material.~~ [Moved to New #001, Lines XX-XX.]

The Committee also recommends adding language to AFBF Policy #503, Climate Change, after Line 2.2 under "We Support":

Standardization, transparency and clarity related to ecosystem services enrollment contracts;

The Committee recommends amending Line 2.3 under "We Support":

Compensation to farmers through USDA programs for planting crops or adopting farming practices that keep carbon in the soil or in plant material;

**For Policy Development**

## 2) Meat Processing

The Committee supports expanding access to small and local meat processors by allowing use of food assistance programs. The Committee recommends adding language to MFB Policy #27, Michigan Meat Processing Industry, after Line 30 under “we support the following”:

- Allowing small and local meat processors to sell local raised meats using SNAP, WIC and other food assistance programs.

### For Policy Development

## 3) MSU Extension

The Committee supports policy to emphasize the need for MSU Extension and 4-H positions at the local level. The Committee therefore recommends adding the following language to MFB Policy #42, Michigan State University at lines 83-85 under “We Support”:

- A re-emphasis on hiring and filling extension educator positions and research-related faculty positions to address the emerging needs and priority issues of the production agriculture industry.

The Committee recommends adding language after Line 85:

- Creation of a talent pipeline/mentoring program for replacing retiring extension educators.

The Committee recommends adding language to Lines 91-93:

- MSUE considering years of applied career experience in lieu of a Master's/Bachelor's degree as an alternate avenue to recruit top-tier applicants into MSUE educator/4-H educator positions.

### For Policy Development

## 4) Biofuels and Fuel Efficiency

The Committee supports both expanding use of a full range of biofuels and using other practices to increase vehicle fuel efficiency. The Committee recommends amending language to MFB Policy #44, Renewable and Biomass Products, at Lines 61-63 under “We Support”:

- Supporting Research and utilization of demonstration programs using ethanol biofuels such as ethanol, farm generated methane and biodiesel as a fuel for fuel cell engine development.

The Committee recommends deleting Lines 64-66 and adding new language after Line 63:

- ~~Supporting research and demonstration programs to expand the use of ethanol and biodiesel as a fuel alternative.~~
- Increase engine efficiency through practices such as raising octane levels by utilizing farm sourced biofuels.

The Committee also recommends amending AFBF Policy #404, Renewable Fuels at Line 2.1.7 under “We Support”:

Legislative and regulatory approval for ~~a minimum 95~~ higher octane fuel standard utilizing higher blends of ~~ethanol~~ farm-sourced biofuels to increase engine efficiency and help automobile manufacturers meet fuel efficiency standards;

### **For Policy Development**

## **5) Recycling**

The Committee recommends support for solutions to address recycling batteries for the growing fleet of electric vehicles, to minimize the risk of pollution and landfilling of recyclable materials. The Committee recommends adding language in MFB Policy #85, Resource Recovery, after Line 30 under “We specifically support strategies for resource recovery through the following”:

- We support the proper recycling of heavy metal (electric vehicle) batteries.

### **For Policy Development**

## **6) Conservation Programs**

The Committee recommends solutions to address delays in contract and paperwork processing that hinders USDA and NRCS staff from working on conservation programs and activities with farmers. The Committee recommends adding language in MFB Policy #86, USDA Conservation Programs, after Line 76 under “we recommend the following”:

- Increase administrative and program staff to support District Conservationists and regional staff to expedite implementation of NRCS programming.

### **For Policy Development**