

Donald Trump on Farm, Food and Rural Policy Issues

Animal Rights:

Trump commented on his [Twitter](#) account about the Ringling Brothers' decision to retire its circus elephants: "Ringling Brothers is phasing out their elephants. I, for one, will never go again. They probably used the animal rights stuff to reduce costs"

Trump's agricultural advisory team includes Forrest Lucas, who founded an organization, [Protect the Harvest](#), to fight restrictions on animal agriculture, and Brian Klippenstein, the group's executive director. (For a full list of Trump's agriculture advisory team, [click here](#).)

Environment/Climate Change:

He has repeatedly pledged to withdraw the Obama administration's "waters of the United States" rule re-defining the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act and to kill the Clean Power Plan, which would regulate carbon emissions from electric utilities.

In response to a survey by the American Farm Bureau Federation (below), Trump promised to appoint a "pro-farmer" administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and he said he would "increase transparency and accountability" in the federal regulatory process. "Rational cost-benefit tests will be used to ensure that any regulation is justified before it is adopted," he said.

Trump also promised the Farm Bureau a "top-down review" of all decisions that the Obama administration has made under the Endangered Species Act, and he pledged to work with Congress to overhaul the law to ensure that it "no longer imposes needless and unwarranted costs on American landowners." Numerous congressional proposals to restrict the use of the ESA have not made it out of the Republican House.

[In speeches, Trump has called for lifting moratoriums on energy production in federal areas](#), and called for revoking "unwarranted restrictions" on new drilling technologies.

He says climate change is a hoax, and says those who warn of global warming only want to raise taxes. He is less outspoken on other environmental issues, though he sued unsuccessfully in 2013 to block plans for wind turbines in Scotland that would power 65,000 homes, arguing, in part, that they would mar the view from a golf course he was proposing to build.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/17/us/politics/donald-trump-on-the-issues.html>

When endorsing Mitt Romney in the 2012 presidential election, Trump [wrote in The Washington Times](#), calling government regulations "a stealth tax that is larger than the amount the Internal Revenue Service collects every year from corporations and individuals combined. In just three years, Mr. Obama has added hugely to the annual regulatory bill."

In his 2000 book, *The America We Deserve*, Trump wrote, "Most of us think the American Dream is a birthright, but without constant care and vigilance, it can and will be whittled down to

nothing. The threatening agent is not some foreign power, but people who don't understand the proper relationship between the public and private arenas. In other words, the greatest threat to the American Dream is the idea that dreamers need close government scrutiny and control. Job one for us is to make sure the public sector does a limited job, and no more."

http://ballotpedia.org/Donald_Trump_presidential_campaign_2016#cite_note-3

Trump has called for eliminating Environmental Protection Agency. "We're going to have little tidbits left but we're going to get most of it out," Trump said during a debate.

Farm Bill/Farm Policy:

Trump has offered few specifics about the farm bill or any type of farm policy while on the campaign trail. In April 2015, he spoke about the farm crisis and how it relates to John Deere, according to the [following excerpt from WHOTV.com](#)

"I'm a big fan of John Deere and, look what we need in this country, we need jobs and we need to be able to export without being taxed to death. You know we take products with no tax, we send our product over there and they tax us to hell because we have people who don't know what they're doing. John Deere however is a great company, it's gonna do just fine," said Trump.

Food Stamps:

In his book "Time to Get Tough: Making America #1 Again," he wrote:

"The food stamp program was originally created as temporary assistance for families with momentary times of need. And it shouldn't be needed often. Thankfully, 96 percent of America's poor parents say their children never suffer even a day of hunger. But when half of food stamp recipients have been on the dole for nearly a decade, something is clearly wrong, and some of it has to do with fraud."

Biotechnology/GMO:

[Donald Trump's Twitter feed reposted a tweet](#) in late October of 2015 that blamed his sliding Iowa poll numbers on biotech corn, a dig that risked getting under the skin of the state's farmers as well as voters at large.

The billionaire's tweet, [originally posted by a Nevada businessman](#), noted that the latest poll showed retired surgeon Ben Carson moving ahead of Trump with GOP voters in Iowa. The tweet then said, "Too much #Monsanto in the #corn creates issues in the brain?"

Trump, or someone working for him, later appeared to apologize and blame the reposting on an intern with this [tweet](#): "The young intern who accidentally did a Retweet apologizes."

Immigration and Labor:

Trump has made immigration a major part of his campaign but some of his positions have changed since he started running for office. He originally called for mass deportations of all illegal immigrants but in August shifted to saying he would focus on deporting criminal aliens and would deal with the status of other illegal immigrants later. He also has proposed requiring Mexico to pay for a border wall, and released [an immigration policy statement](#) that calls for mandating that all employers use E-Verify to check the legal status of new hires. "We're a country of laws. We either have a country or we don't have a country," [Trump said during one of the Republican debates](#). Illegal immigration will "have to go out and they will come back, but they are going to have to go out and hopefully they get back."

On Oct. 5, 2016, California Farm Bureau President Paul Wenger asked Trump during a phone call with American Farm Bureau leaders about his immigration stance. Trump's response was that agriculture needs a reliable workforce and he will work to see that it happens.

Trump's previous policy statement called for eliminating the H1-B class of visas that allow companies to import high-skilled immigrants, but after a debate, said "I'm changing. I'm changing. We need highly skilled people in this country, and if we can't do it, we'll get them in. But, and we do need in Silicon Valley, we absolutely have to have."

The [immigration policy that is currently posted](#) on his web site calls for moving "criminal aliens out day one, in joint operations with local, state, and federal law enforcement. We will terminate the Obama administration's deadly, non-enforcement policies that allow thousands of criminal aliens to freely roam our streets." That position statement makes no reference to E-Verify.

During the 2013 Conservative Political Action Conference, Trump said providing a path to citizenship would be politically disadvantageous for Republicans. He explained, "You can be out front, you can be the spearhead, you can do whatever you want to do, but every one of those 11 million people will be voting Democratic. It's just the way it works and you have to be very, very careful, because you could say that to a certain extent, the odds aren't looking so great right now for Republicans, that you're on a suicide mission. You're just not going to get those votes."

Trump also rejects birthright citizenship, the principle that children born in the United States are American citizens even if their parents are in the country illegally. "The clear purpose of the Fourteenth Amendment, ratified in 1868, three years after the end of the Civil War, was to guarantee full citizenship rights to now emancipated former slaves. It was not intended to guarantee untrammelled immigration to the United States.

In 2000, Trump said in his book, "The America We Deserve," that legal immigration should be made more challenging. Trump wrote, "The majority of legal immigrants can often make significant contributions to our society because they have special skills and because they add to our nation's cultural diversity. They come with the best of intentions. But legal immigrants do not and should not enter easily. It's a long, costly, draining, and often frustrating experience-by design. I say to legal immigrants: Welcome and good luck."

http://ballotpedia.org/Donald_Trump_presidential_campaign, 2016#cite_note-3

Labor:

During the announcement of his presidential bid on June 16, 2015, Donald Trump claimed, "I will be the greatest jobs president that God ever created. I'll bring back our jobs from China, from Japan from Mexico from so many places. I'll bring back our jobs and I'll bring back our money."

In 2011, while appearing on FOX's "The O'Reilly Factor," Trump said Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker's approach to unions in Wisconsin was appropriate for that state but not for the nation. Trump explained, "You know, I have had great relationship over the years with unions. We've had collective bargaining. I have become very wealthy. I have dealt with unions because, as you know, New York is largely unions. You are dealing with them. I have great friends that are in unions and heads of unions. So I haven't had the same difficulty and problem. But I think you have to do what's right for your area."

http://ballotpedia.org/Donald_Trump_presidential_campaign, 2016#cite_note-3

Rural Development: RFS:

Trump gets a "good" rating from [America's Renewable Future](#) because of his support for the RFS. "I am totally in favor of ethanol, 100 percent," he said during a September 2015 event in Iowa.

Trade:

Trump opposes the Trans-Pacific Partnership, [calling it a "terrible deal,"](#) and [has called for tearing up the North American Free-Trade Agreement](#) unless Mexico agrees to renegotiate it.

In a statement released to The Daily Caller in May 2015, Donald Trump criticized the Trans-Pacific Partnership, saying, "Yet again, the politicians are allowing our president to reinforce the lack of respect countries like China and Japan now have for the United States. They will devalue their currency, exploit our trade agreements, continue to destroy our economy and put Americans out of work. Politicians are all talk and no action. Instead of fast tracking TPP, Congress should pass legislation that holds China and Japan accountable for currency manipulation. This would send a message to the world that there are consequences for cheating the United States."

During a phone call on Oct. 5, 2016, Donald Trump assured leaders of the American Farm Bureau Federation that they will like his policies on trade. According to participants, Trump made some introductory remarks in which he said that he understood that the farm economy is in a downturn, and then he took three questions. In response to a question about trade, Trump reiterated his pledge

to renegotiate a new agreement to replace the Trans-Pacific Partnership and told the group that “it will be fantastic.”

Trump released a radio ad in May 2015 recommending Congress reject Trade Promotion Authority. Trump said, "I learned a long time ago, a bad deal is far worse than no deal at all. And the Obama Trans-Pacific Partnership and fast track are a bad, bad deal for American businesses, for workers, for taxpayers. It's a huge set of hand outs for a few insiders that don't even care about our great, great America. Congress has to stand up and defeat this raw power grab. With the dismal Obama track record, why should a Republican Congress give him more power and gut the Constitution to do it? It's just crazy. Tell your congressmen and senators, vote no on fast track."

On April 22, 2015, Trump tweeted, "The Trans-Pacific Partnership is an attack on America's business. It does not stop Japan's currency manipulation. This is a bad deal."

http://ballotpedia.org/Donald_Trump_presidential_campaign,_2016#cite_note-3

Trump is [proposing to crack down on China](#). He is calling for naming China as a currency manipulator and slapping countervailing duties on Chinese exports that he says are artificially cheap. He also promises to continue pursuing a WTO case against Chinese export subsidies that he says are illegal.

Taxes:

Trump's tax reform plan would collapse the individual tax rates to 10, 20 and 25 percent and tax dividends and capital gains at a maximum rate of 20 percent. Trump would also repeal the estate tax and the alternative minimum tax. He would limit deductions for the higher brackets, but the deductions for charitable contributions and mortgage interest would continue.

According to [an analysis by the Tax Policy Center](#), the plan would reduce federal revenues by \$9.5 trillion over its first decade and increase the national debt by nearly 80 percent of GDP by 2036, unless the lost revenue is offset by spending cuts.

People at all income levels would benefit. Some 110 million households would pay no income tax under the plan, up from 77 million under current law. The top 1 percent of earners would get an average tax cut of over \$275,000, or 17.5 percent of after-tax income.

Trump's response to questions from the American Farm Bureau Federation are listed below:

Regulatory Reform

AFBF: As president, what actions will you take to minimize the federal government's regulatory burden on businesses such as farming and ranching? Will you support regulatory reform to ensure that federal regulations pass a cost-benefit test and make the process of writing new regulations more transparent?

Trump: “Our nation’s regulatory system is completely broken. Terrible rules are written by unelected, unaccountable bureaucrats who often know nothing about the people they are regulating. The regulators have all of the power, and our nation’s farmers are often forced to endure costly, burdensome, and unwise regulations that are bad for American farmers and consumers. In many instances, extreme environmental groups have more influence in setting the

regulations than the farmers and ranchers who are directly impacted. Hillary Clinton will do the bidding of the radical environmentalists. Whether through excessive land-use restrictions that impact farmers and ranchers, environmental requirements that impose enormous costs on farmers, or over-reaching food product regulations, federal regulatory burdens have increased dramatically in recent years. This must change.

As President, I will work with Congress to reform our regulatory system. We will reduce the power of government bureaucrats, and increase the freedom of our nation's farmers to be as productive as possible. We will increase transparency and accountability in the regulatory process. Rational cost-benefit tests will be used to ensure that any regulation is justified before it is adopted. Unjustified regulations that are bad for American farmers and consumers will be changed or repealed. There will be no more "sue and settle" deals with extreme environmentalists."

Farm bill

AFBF: Federal farm programs and crop insurance provide an important safety net and risk management tool for farmers and ranchers, as well as consumers. Farm programs help keep America's farmers growing, even after a "bad year," so our consumers can continue to enjoy a plentiful, affordable food supply. It also provides food security for at-risk segments of the consumer population. Our nation is stronger when the alignment between farm and food assistance policies exists.

Farm programs cost less than 1 percent of our entire federal budget, while they keep our nation strong and non-reliant on other countries for our most basic need--food. Yet these long-standing, much reformed programs have been under fire by liberals and conservatives alike. As president, how will you stand with farm and ranch families and consumers to protect these important programs?

Trump: "The Trump-Pence Administration will be an active participant in writing the next Farm Bill and delivering it on time! Our farmers deserve a good farm bill written by those who are thankful for our remarkable food system in this country. I support a strong safety net for our nation's farmers.

"Importantly, I have assembled an Agriculture Advisory Committee comprised of leaders who represent the best that America can offer to help serve agricultural communities. Many of these officials have been elected by their communities to solve the issues that impact our rural areas every day. I'm very proud to stand with these men and women, and look forward to serving with them in serving all Americans from the White House. A full-list of members of my Agriculture Advisory Committee is available at <https://www.donaldjtrump.com/press-releases/trump-campaign-announces-agricultural-advisory-committee>.

Immigration Reform and Ag Labor

AFBF: As president, what would you do to advance immigration reform and resolve the critical labor shortage that many farmers and ranchers face each year? How would you address the issue of undocumented workers who are already working on farms across America, as well as the need for a long-term supply of agricultural workers?

Trump: “I recognize the unique labor challenges facing the American farm community and will include farmers and ranchers in the process of determining the best possible immigration policies. To be clear, the Obama-Clinton system of open borders is wreaking havoc on our rural communities. Enormous stresses are being placed on state and local government services, while jobs for American citizens and wages for American workers are in decline. Here are my three core principles of real immigration reform:

1. A nation without borders is not a nation. There must be a wall across the southern border.
2. A nation without laws is not a nation. Laws passed in accordance with our Constitutional system of government must be enforced.
3. A nation that does not serve its own citizens is not a nation. Any immigration plan must improve jobs, wages and security for all Americans.

On August 31, 2016, I gave a policy speech in Phoenix, Arizona, where I provided details on my immigration plan. This speech is available for review on my website”

<https://www.donaldjtrump.com/press-releases/donald-j.-trump-address-on-immigration>.

International Trade/Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement

AFBF: The United States has worked assertively over many different presidencies to set the example for fair and open trade, for resolving trade disputes using sound, science-based principles and standards and for gaining access to new markets. As president, will you be an aggressive proponent for expanding trade and be willing to pursue remedies against nations and their leaders who use various barriers to unfairly shield their markets from competition?

The TPP Agreement would boost U.S. agriculture exports and grow farmers’ and ranchers’ income by more than \$4 billion a year. That market growth and income boost is needed more than ever as our farmers face a downturn in commodity prices. Will you support ratification of the TPP Agreement to bring down foreign tariffs, address non-science-based barriers to trade and enable America’s farmers to sell more of their farm goods around the world?

Trump: “As President, I will be an aggressive proponent for defending the economic interests of American workers and farmers on the world stage. I will fight against unfair trade deals and foreign trade practices that disadvantage the United States.

“I strongly oppose TPP as drafted and will work hard to develop trade agreements that are in the national interest and benefit American workers including our farmers.”

Energy

AFBF: Agriculture is a growing provider of renewable energy—contributing to America’s energy independence and revitalizing rural economies. Will your support federal policies that encourage the production and use of farm-grown fuel stocks and renewable energy?

Trump: “Yes. I support the use of domestic energy sources including farm-grown fuel stocks such as ethanol. We will implement an America First Energy Plan that enables the United States to become the world's dominant leader in energy production and gets the government out of the way

of innovation among all forms of energy. My administration will develop a regulatory and legislative roadmap to:

- Restore the important role of U.S. coal in the American economy.
- Rescind Obama's executive actions and regulations that are outdated, unnecessary, bad for workers, illegal, or contrary to the national interest, including the Climate Action Plan and Waters of the US rule.
- Lift moratoriums on energy production in federal areas.
- Support the Keystone XL Pipeline and other important energy infrastructure projects.
- Revoke policies that impose unwarranted restrictions on new drilling technologies.
- Ensure affordable, reliable, clean electricity from coal, natural gas, nuclear, hydropower, solar, wind, and other domestic sources.
- Encourage the use of free-market principles in energy policy instead of the federal government choosing winners and losers.
- End U.S. involvement in the Paris Climate Agreement and stop payments of US tax dollars to UN global warming programs.
- Select top officials at the Energy Department, FERC, NRC, EPA, Interior Department, and other relevant federal agencies who will faithfully execute the laws of the United States, implement policies that are consistent with an America First energy plan, and not seek to use their power to push an extreme environmental agenda.”

Food Safety

AFBF: Food quality and safety are vital concerns for consumers and farmers and ranchers. Consumers are increasingly interested in where their food comes from, but their views are often influenced by misinformation and a lack of understanding of agriculture. How would you ensure that farmers and ranchers have the necessary freedom to operate while working to meet consumers’ demands for a variety of food choices, whether organic or conventional, meat or vegetarian, local or the household-name products many of us grew up with and still enjoy thanks to our major national food makers? There is no one size fits all in agriculture. Would you ensure that regulations do not restrict consumers’ or farmers’ food and production choices?

Trump: “The Trump Administration will be a pro-agriculture Administration. As President, I will fight for American farmers and their families. Through hard work, persistence and innovation, and making wise use of our nation's God-given lands and resources, American farmers are the best in the world at growing the food and other products that people need to flourish. Growing our farm sector and supporting our nation’s farmers are absolutely critical steps to making America great again. Too often, bad policies and needless government mandates harm farmers and make food and farm products more costly for consumers. I support, and will implement, policies that are good for

farmers and consumers. For example, I oppose unwarranted government mandates that hurt farmers and confuse consumers, such as mandatory biotech labeling.

I will also fight for tax reform that reduces tax burdens on American farmers. We will end the death tax. I will reverse the EPA's war on farmers by rescinding the Waters of the US rule, climate rule, and the host of other regulations that are harming farmers without helping the environment. I will appoint justices to the Supreme Court who will defend the 2nd Amendment. Hillary Clinton will appoint justices who will eviscerate 2nd Amendment rights. Most importantly, we will get the entire U.S. economy growing again, which will be a boon to the Agriculture sector as well.”

Endangered Species Act

AFBF: Privately owned land provides habitat for the majority of our nation’s endangered and threatened species. As a result landowners often face harsh regulatory restrictions on their ability to use the land or, worse, lawsuits or enforcement actions. Meanwhile, few species have actually been recovered under the law. It’s time to think about incentive-based programs that create a positive role for landowners in species recovery. The law is overdue for review and revamping. As president, how would you fix the broken Endangered Species Act, and what role would you assign America’s landowners?

Trump: “America is blessed with abundant natural resources and beautiful wildlife. Our nation has a proud tradition of conservation and stewardship. This is more true for farmers than anyone else. Farmers care more for the environment than the radical environmentalists. Regrettably, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) has a poor track record of actually helping to recover animals at risk of extinction. In truth, the ESA has become a tool to block economic development, deny property rights to American landowners, and enrich activist groups and lawyers. Instead of saving endangered species, the Obama-Clinton bureaucrats are endangering American workers with disastrous choices made at the whim of extreme activist groups.

As President, I will direct the Interior Department and Commerce Department to conduct a top-down review of all Obama Administration settlements, rules, and executive actions under the Endangered Species Act and other similar laws, and we will change or rescind any of those actions that are unlawful, bad for American farmers and workers, or not in the national interest. I will also work closely with Congress to improve and modernize the Endangered Species Act—a law that is now more than 30 years old—so that it is more transparent, uses the best science, incentivizes species conservation, protects private property rights, and no longer imposes needless and unwarranted costs on American landowners.”

Clean Water

AFBF: The Environmental Protection Agency has clear direction from both Congress and the Supreme Court on the limitations of its authority under the Clean Water Act, and yet the agency continues to push the limits or ignore them completely. What would you do as president to ensure that the EPA acts within the bounds of the Clean Water Act?

Trump: “First, I will appoint a pro-farmer Administrator of EPA. Next, I will eliminate the unconstitutional “Waters of the US” rule, and will direct the Army Corps of Engineers and EPA to no longer use this unlawful rule and related guidance documents in making jurisdictional

determinations. This rule is so extreme that it gives federal agencies control over creeks, small streams, and even puddles or mostly dry areas on private property. I will also ensure that these agencies respect the valid exclusions under environmental statutes for agricultural practices. To be clear, my Administration will work to ensure clean water for all Americans while also restoring the proper limits of federal jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act. Unlike the Obama-Clinton team, my Administration will work cooperatively with the States—most of which have been completely ignored by EPA under the Obama Administration—to achieve shared, common-sense environmental goals.”

Clean Air Act

AFBF: Greenhouse gas regulations that would raise farmers’ cost of production or impose a carbon tax would put American farmers and other businesses at a competitive disadvantage to farmers and businesses in other countries that would face fewer regulations while continuing to pollute the planet. How would you ensure that clean air and climate regulations are within the scope of federal agencies’ statutory authority and do not hamper American productivity and competitiveness?

Trump: “I strongly oppose the extreme, climate alarmism agenda of the Obama-Clinton years. Too often, the Obama-Clinton team imposed billions of dollars in environmental costs on American citizens without achieving real environmental benefits. In fact, the Obama EPA cut funding to the States for water infrastructure and programs that help rural communities while increasing spending on EPA bureaucrats, lawyers, and UN climate programs. As President, I will rescind the Climate Action Plan (including the Clean Power Plan) and other excessive regulations issued under the Clean Air Act that impose unjustified costs on American workers and farmers. My administration will work cooperatively with the States to achieve shared, common-sense environmental goals. Affordable energy is critical to the success of American farmers. According to a recent report in the Wall Street Journal, the Obama-Clinton climate agenda will cost the U.S. over \$5 trillion. We cannot afford to allow the Obama-Clinton policies of high energy costs and overreaching regulations to continue any longer.”

Biotechnology

AFBF: Our future food security will depend on science, technology and innovation to increase efficiency, adapt to droughts and fight plant diseases. Agricultural biotechnology and other new crop development techniques will prove vital. As president, how will you ensure that new traits are reviewed expeditiously, that USDA’s GMO disclosure rules are focused on science and that solutions from science and technology are harnessed to meet the challenge of feeding a growing world?

Trump: “I support the use of technology in food production, which has enabled American farmers to increase yields to levels never before experienced in the history of the world. Through innovation, American farmers are producing crops more resilient to drought, heat, and pests. Government should not block positive technological advancements in agriculture. Agency reviews need to be streamlined with all unnecessary red-tape cut out.”

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