



Iowa Farmers Union is a grassroots member organization of family farmers, ranchers, advocates, and consumers who work to promote and strengthen the independent family farm. Our legislative priorities are proposed, debated, and voted on directly by our members. IFU's family farmer members include corn, soybean and grain farmers, livestock producers, dairy producers, organic farmers, fruit and vegetable and specialty crop growers, and diversified market farms that sell directly to Iowa consumers. As the oldest general farm organization in Iowa, the IFU has served as the voice of family farmers since 1915.

2022 Legislative Priorities

PROTECTING FARMS FROM PESTICIDE DRIFT

We are committed to protecting our farmers from crop losses and injuries caused by pesticide drift. Farmers are experiencing more problems with herbicide-resistant weeds. Several states have placed bans on specific chemicals and others have adopted date restrictions for applications. Iowa needs to develop a systematic response to this challenge now to protect our farmers from tough market losses.

We support:

- Allowing fees to be collected into a designated fund used by IDALS (Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship) Pesticide Bureau
- Requiring the availability of online incident reporting and electronic record keeping of usage
- Increasing fees for licensed pesticide distributors and applicators and increasing the \$500 maximum fine for pesticide misuse
- Increasing staff capacity to enforce existing rules

SOIL HEALTH

Farmers rely on healthy soils to support their livelihood. Strong conservation, regenerative, and climate-smart farming techniques build soil health and contribute to farm profitability. Iowa should focus efforts to reward practices which build healthy soils and healthy watersheds.

We support:

- **Including initiatives for soil health improvement in the duties and responsibilities of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.**
- **Directing IDALS and Iowa State University (ISU) to lead research efforts to develop practical soil health indicators and plans for farmer engagement.**



WATER QUALITY

Water quality is not only important to the success of our farms, but also imperative to the success of our farmers and their families. The legislature has taken some steps to improve Iowa's water quality, but there is more work to be done because the quality of Iowa's water is not getting better. Over the past five years more than 60 Iowa communities have reported unsafe nitrate levels in their drinker water and the clean-up costs for nutrient pollution is estimated at \$4 billion.

We support:

- Monitoring of potential impacts of CAFOs on Iowa's economic, environmental, and public health and the implementation of a moratorium on factory farm livestock operations until Iowa successfully addresses the massive number of impaired waterways
- Watershed approach to water quality with comprehensive and consistent assessment, planning, implementation, and monitoring of all contaminants
- A water quality monitoring program for private wells to allow rural residents and local public health agencies to assess potential contamination of rural water supplies
- Funding the Nature Resources Trust Fund and maintaining the current funding formula supported by a overwhelming majority of Iowa voters. Funding the trust should not be done in a way that leads to a drastic repressive tax structure or a depleted state government.

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