

AG & NATURAL RESOURCES

NATURAL RESOURCES

1. CAFOs and FEEDING OPERATIONS (amended '08)

WHEREAS: Animal feeding contributes to the overall economic sustainability of South Dakota's livestock industry.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association;

1. Supports local administration of rules, regulations, research and the development of local standards for animal feeding operations.
2. Encourages producers to be active in the development of state and national rules and strategies pertaining to animal feeding operations.
3. Opposes additional regulatory proposals by EPA-USDA's Clean Water Action Plan on operations not designated as CAFOs, unless site specific and scientifically verifiable research proves an operation is in an impaired watershed and is contributing to a runoff problem.
4. Strongly encourages the Nature Resource Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency to emphasize technical and cost share programs that assist all operations in improving manure and runoff systems.

2. FOSSIL PROTECTION ON STATE LANDS ('94)

WHEREAS: South Dakota has some of the most extensive and valuable deposits of fossils of ancient plant and animal life in the United States; and

WHEREAS: The Task Force on Paleontology of the South Dakota State Historical Society has recently completed a two-year study of the extent of fossil resources in South Dakota and their potential for scientific, educational and rural economic and tourism development; and

WHEREAS: South Dakota now has no legal means to protect and preserve rare or valuable fossils on state-owned lands from damage and loss by unauthorized and commercial exploitation; and

WHEREAS: Fossil hunters are a growing problem for ranchers and farmers. Proper regulations and a reliable source of information and assistance to farm and ranch landowners and lessees could help protect landowner rights and possible financial returns.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association encourage the efforts of the South Dakota State Historical Society to initiate legislation for the protection and responsible management of South Dakota's fossil resources on state-owned lands.

3. SAFE DRINKING WATER ACT ('94)

WHEREAS: The Safe Drinking Water Act, which protects water quality for human consumption, must be implemented and enforced by states; and

WHEREAS: The cost of compliance for rural communities and businesses who provide water will be burdensome and may require extensive testing for numerous potential contaminants; and

WHEREAS: State programs may require purchase and/or easements of significant amounts of private property surrounding public water supplies; and

WHEREAS: This constitutes a taking of private property.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association opposes unnecessary federal regulations which result in a taking of private property without just compensation, or result in excessive burdens on water suppliers which provide drinking water.

4. NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) (Revised '08)

WHEREAS: The strength of our nation and its future depends largely upon its soil and related natural resources; and

WHEREAS: The enabling legislation for, and mission statement of, the USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides for cost-effective technical assistance provided for landowner participation on a voluntary basis; and

WHEREAS: The NRCS has assumed a compliance role and is therefore no longer acting consistently with the intent of NRCS enabling legislation or its mission statement.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association urged NRCS to continue in its vital role to assist in the preservation and conservation of the nation's soil and water, restore its original mission and provide sufficient resources for needed technical assistance on private lands, while incorporating property rights and management techniques favorable to landowners into cost sharing agreements.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association believes that technical assistance provided by NRCS on private grazing lands be delivered only by individuals with extensive pasture and range management training.

5. WETLANDS ('99)

WHEREAS: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association believes in the 5th Amendment and protection of private property rights; and

WHEREAS: The economic stability and value of private property can be negatively affected by current state and federal wetlands regulations; and

WHEREAS: Current state wetlands regulations are excessive and intrusive compared to neighboring states.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association supports current state and federal wetlands regulations reform through National Resources and Conservation Services, and encourages continued cooperation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association play a leadership role in obtaining legislation that would allow farmers to enroll wetlands and farmed wetlands in the CRP under continuous signup and that farmers are represented on the FSA rulemaking committee to ensure participation.

6. FOREST MANAGEMENT ('02)

BE IT RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association supports forest management practices that balance all interests. We support proper use and multipurpose management of natural resources that include realizing human interests at least equal to all other management choices.

7. FIRE FIGHTING COOPERATION ('02)

BE IT RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association urges that cooperation be exercised by Federal, State, County and City, and organized volunteer fire fighting personnel and not thwart first responder efforts or initial attacks.

8. DROUGHT (NATURAL DISASTER) (amended '08)

BE IT RESOLVED: In the event of a natural disaster, the South Dakota Stockgrowers Association urges the United States Department of Agriculture to release emergency funds to affected area in a timely manner.

9. COALBED METHANE WASTEWATER ('02)

BE IT RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association encourages the South Dakota Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to ensure that all Coalbed Methane (CBM) wastewater discharged to any tributaries of South Dakota rivers comply with all provisions of the Clean Water Act.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association encourages the South Dakota DENR to ensure that CBM wastewater discharged to any tributaries of South Dakota rivers does not contribute to the degradation of the river channels.

10. SCHOOL & PUBLIC LANDS TRADES ('01) (Revised '02)

BE IT RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association opposes land trades between South Dakota School & Public Lands and any private party, government agency or NGO; unless the trade is approved by the respective county commissioners.

11. GE, RR Alfalfa ('08)

WHEREAS: Genetically Engineered (GE) or Roundup Ready (RR) alfalfa is deemed by two Federal Court decisions to be illegal to sell or plant;

WHEREAS: it is acknowledged fact that GE alfalfa has and can continue to genetically drift or cross-pollinate existing fields of conventional alfalfa constituting "irreversible harm" to conventional and organic alfalfa producers.

WHEREAS: the cost of testing each and every lot of alfalfa seed for contamination by RR DNA is a necessary and costly burden to conventional alfalfa growers.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association opposes the alfalfa seed production, pollination, contamination, sale of, planting, and genetic drift of this illegal and invasive specie and urges the South Dakota and the United States Departments of Agriculture to require all tests of purity and germ of alfalfa seed tested by labs in South Dakota or entering South Dakota to also be tested for RR genes.

12. CAP AND TRADE LEGISLATION (09)

Whereas: South Dakota Stockgrowers Association members acknowledge that scientists are not in agreement as to whether our climate change is a result of manmade global warming or rather natural heating and cooling cycles which have existed since the origin of planet earth, and

Whereas: The Economic impact of present Cap and Trade Legislation on farmers and ranchers has not been determined and estimates of such an impact vary widely, and

Whereas: In addition to the current economic recession, any Cap and Trade policies could jeopardize the wellbeing of all US industry but especially Agriculture and our nation's food supply, and

Whereas: Policies relating to currently pending Cap and Trade Legislation will burden US citizens and not the major Carbon Dioxide polluting countries of the world. Any sacrifices for any known climate changes must be cooperative and global in nature.

Whereas: many questions remain unanswered concerning the moral aspects connected to the trading of a commodity which serves no solution toward reducing global emissions but rather provides an excuse for polluters to continue polluting at past levels.

Therefore Be It Resolved: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association endorses a policy of delaying any Cap and Trade legislation until at such time as the above concerns can be addressed and the full environmental, economic, and social impact of such legislation becomes transparent

RANGE MANAGEMENT

1. WEEDS AND PESTS (revised '15)

WHEREAS: It has been mandated by the South Dakota Legislature to develop county weed and pest boards for the control of noxious weeds and declared pests in South Dakota; and

WHEREAS: The total burden of funding these boards has been placed upon the taxpayers of each county; and

WHEREAS: We have many combines and farm industry machines entering our state from other areas of the United States with little or no inspection; and

WHEREAS: Noxious weeds and pests (such as prairie dogs) on federal and state lands are spreading and contaminating private lands; and

WHEREAS: The problem of noxious weeds and declared pests is statewide.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association requests that;

1. State funding be appropriated to the Weed and Pest Control Program to lessen the burden upon the counties and local taxpayers.

2. South Dakota Ports of Entry establish a strict inspection of combines, farm industry machines and seed entering the state.

3. All federal and state land management agencies implement a more effective weed and pest control program on federal and state land.

4. The governor, declare all State and Federal highway right-of-ways be mowed and/or sprayed in a timely manner for noxious weed control, maintenance, and safety purposes. Adjacent landowners will be encouraged to mow without cost.

5. That holders of any private and/or public easement be responsible for mowing, spraying, and managing noxious weeds in an effective, timely manner.

2. EPA PHOSPHOROUS ('99)

WHEREAS: The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has proposed to use Phosphorous in place of Nitrogen to limit the amount of manure applied per acres of land.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association does not support using Phosphorous to limit land application of manure unless site specific scientific study show phosphorous to be a problem.

3. PROPER RANGE MANAGEMENT

WHEREAS: It is recognized that the better plant populations serve as a hedge against major livestock reduction caused by drought; and

WHEREAS: Many undesirable plants can be controlled with competition from desirable and vigorous forage plants; and

WHEREAS: Periods of grazing rest or deferments have been universally shown to improve plant vigor and favor better plant populations.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association challenge each rancher to adopt his own management system that will provide for proper stocking and a period of rest during the growing season for each pasture.

4. RANGELAND INSURANCE PROGRAM ('15)

Be It Resolved: Producers should be able to sign up for NAP and Pasture, Rangeland, and Forage (PRF).

Be It Further Resolved: The Sign up period should be conducted in a timeframe allowing producers to know results of previous year before committing.

Be It Further Resolved: Results should be based on a combination of Rainfall Index and Vegetative Index satellite readings, and producers should be provided an appeals process which includes ground survey for actual conditions, and

Be It Further Resolved: Inadequate results from the satellite imagery should suggest the native hay measurements program should be implemented as a tried and true program.

Be It Further Resolved: 100% loss should be determined on 30% greenness factor.

Be It Further Resolved: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association encourages the USDA Risk Management Agency to provide a program that is cost effective to protect the producers of South Dakota from catastrophic losses of rangeland.

5. GRASSHOPPER REDUCTION PROGRAM ('15)

Be It Further Resolved: The state and federal government is requested to help find grant moneys for cost sharing the grasshopper reduction programs on private land to keep the cost as low as possible to increase producer participation.

6. GRASSLAND CONVERSION ('11)

WHEREAS: Grazing lands are essential to the cow/calf and yearling producer and are the foundation of the livestock industry, and wildlife habitat, and

WHEREAS: Federal farm program payments and crop insurance are a valuable tool; however, current federal policy often has the unintended consequence of encouraging investors and speculators to convert grazing land with no previous cropping history to tillable acres, and

WHEREAS: Current farm program payments and federal crop insurance policy often creates an uneven economic playing field between grazing and cropping interests that often makes it difficult for ranchers (particularly young operators) to remain economically competitive,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: The South Dakota Stockgrowers Association will work to include a Farm Bill a provision that fully respects an individual's free market property right to convert grazing land without previous cropping history to cropland; however, such converted tracts of land will be ineligible for all federal subsidy supports, including commodity payments and crop insurance, on new cropland acres put into production by breaking grassland with no previous cropping history.