



Florida Farm Bureau Policy Development Manual

Policy isn't much different than farming. You plant the ideas, you nurture them, you give them some room to grow and then, if you've done everything right, you reap the rewards.

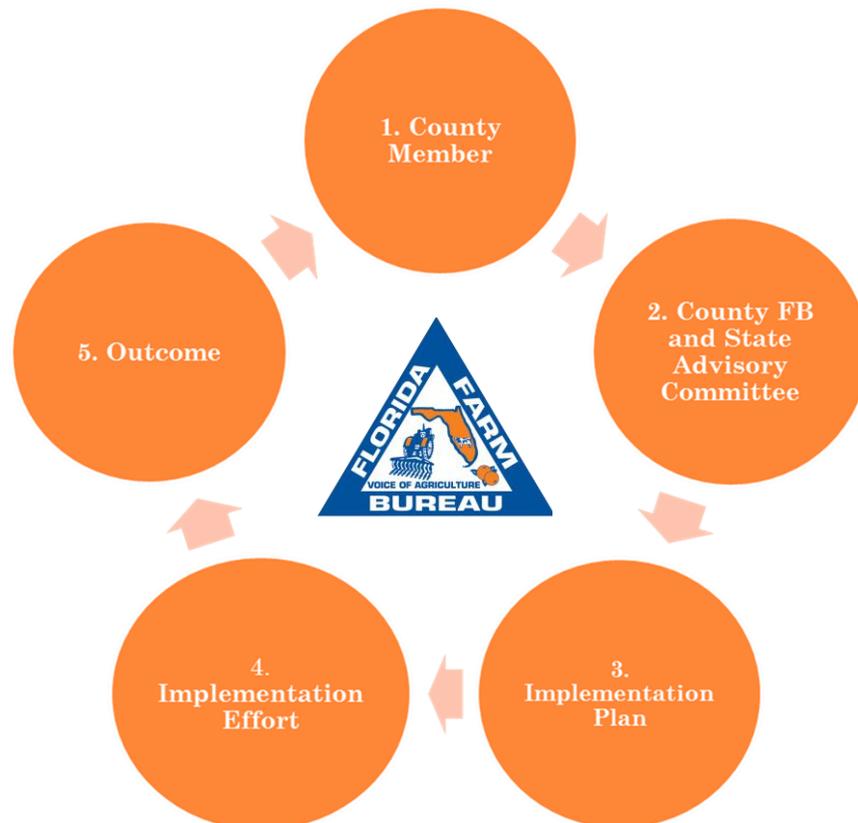
Table of Contents

Your Part in the Florida Farm Bureau Ag Policy Team.....	3
Getting Started.....	4
Policy Format-Hints for Drafting Policy.....	5
Policy Resources.....	6
Example of Sound Policy.....	7
Policy Development Calendar.....	8
FFBF Policy Development Process.....	9

Your Part in the Ag Policy Team

The Ag Policy Division at Florida Farm Bureau focuses on local, state and national matters. Within this team, team members focus on various aspects of achieving the mission “to increase the net income of farmers and ranchers, and to improve the quality of rural life.” In summary, the team works to implement the desired policy that Farm Bureau members want and that all starts with you!

Policy is truly the basis on which the organization was founded. As a member, your position is instrumental in making sure that Florida Farm Bureau continues its reputation for forward-thinking, and sound and logical policy.



Getting Started



1 You have an idea, need or concern.

2 Your County researches and considers your idea.



3 You vet the resolution and provide it to the Ag Policy Division in writing prior to Oversight.



4 The FFBF Oversight Committee serves as the resolutions committee. It reviews all new resolutions and any in conflict.

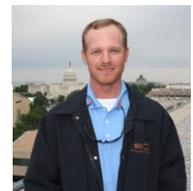


5 FFBF delegates address every policy and new resolution and adopt all.

6 If your FFBF policy has national implication, it will be forwarded to American Farm Bureau.



7 You benefit from your own policy. After all, it started with you!



The Ag Policy Division serves to support you along the way. Please don't hesitate to contact us for assistance or questions. (352) 374-1543.

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Policy Format-Hints for Drafting Policy

Criteria for a good policy

- Does it directly affect agriculture?
- Does it ask for or will it result in action?
- Is it forward-looking?
- Is it of high interest to our members?
- Should it be done by Farm Bureau?
- Is the concern/issue covered in a current policy?

Suggestions on what to write

- State the problem and the result expected
- Specific enough to establish a clear goal
- General enough to give latitude to accomplish goal

Policy Resources

Farm Bureau Resources

1. Individual Farm Bureau members
2. County Farm Bureau Committees
3. Farm Bureau Advisory Committees
4. Farm Bureau staff
5. Farm Bureau publications
 - County President's Weekly
 - FloridAgriculture e-news
 - Florida Agriculture magazine
 - <http://www.floridafarmbureau.org/>
 - <http://www.fb.org/>

Non-Farm Bureau Resources

1. University of Florida/IFAS
 - Faculty/staff
 - Research and Education Centers
2. Agricultural organizations
3. Federal, State and County officials
4. Federal, State and County agencies

Every agriculture product requires some inputs-a little help to grow, so does a policy.

Example of Sound Policy

108. Sale of Raw Milk

In the interest of public safety, we oppose the sale of raw milk and raw milk products that do not meet food safety standards for human consumption. (DAIRY)

Answers all questions:

- Does it directly affect agriculture? √
- Does it ask for or will it result in action? √
- Is it forward-looking? √
- Is it of high interest to our members? √
- Should it be done by Farm Bureau? √
- Is the concern/issue covered in a current policy? Y/N

Originally proposed language that should be used as background:

Sale of Raw Milk

Milk and milk products provide a wealth of nutrition benefits. But raw milk can harbor dangerous microorganisms that can pose serious health risks to you and your family. According to an analysis by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), between 1993 and 2006 more than 1500 people in the United States became sick from drinking raw milk or eating cheese made from raw milk. In addition, CDC reported that unpasteurized milk is 150 times more likely to cause foodborne illness and results in 13 times more hospitalizations than illnesses involving pasteurized dairy products.

Raw milk is milk from cows, sheep, or goats that has not been pasteurized to kill harmful bacteria. This raw, unpasteurized milk can carry dangerous bacteria such as *Salmonella*, *E. coli*, and *Listeria*, which are responsible for causing numerous foodborne illnesses.

These harmful bacteria can seriously affect the health of anyone who drinks raw milk, or eats foods made from raw milk. However, the bacteria in raw milk can be especially dangerous to people with weakened immune systems, older adults, pregnant women, and children. In fact, the CDC analysis found that foodborne illness from raw milk especially affected children and teenagers.

Policy Development Calendar

January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory Committee member's 1-year appointment begins (Jan. 1- Dec. 31) • AFBF Annual Meeting
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFBF Issue Advisory Committee meetings and Advocacy Conference • FFBF Tallahassee Days • FFBF Winter Advisory Commodity Conference (held on odd numbered years)
March and April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FFBF Spring Advisory Committee meetings • FFBF Field to the Hill
July and August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FFBF Fall Advisory Committee meetings • FFBF Advisory Committee nominations due
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FFBF Oversight Committee meeting
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FFBF Annual Meeting -Late resolutions due by 4pm on the first day
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FFBF new policy book available
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory Committee member retirement letters mailed and welcome letters immediately follow

FFBF Policy Development Process

Florida Farm Bureau's policy development process is a historically proven method for creating, modifying and adopting reliable policies. These policies provide guidance for the organization and they are not made in haste. The process takes a full year to complete.

Policy resolutions may be submitted to FFBF in three ways: (1) by a County Farm Bureau, (2) through an Advisory Committee, or (3) by the FFBF Board of Directors. County Farm Bureau's that submit a policy resolution proposal may want to seek other County Farm Bureau's support.

The FFBF Oversight Committee is appointed by the FFBF President based on geographical location, commodity diversity and gender diversity. The Oversight Committee reviews and takes action on all new resolutions as well as any policies that do not fit with specific commodity committees. The Oversight Committee also reviews any policy that may conflict with another. The actions from the Oversight Committee are included in the resolutions report that is provided to every county president prior to the annual meeting.

County Farm Bureau's may submit new resolutions up until the start of the general session at FFBF's Annual Meeting. These late resolutions should be used for emergency situations only.

History has proven that the earlier a policy resolution is drafted and distributed, the better chance it has of being successful. Vetting the resolution through the appropriate Advisory Committee and then the Oversight Committee is best. Voting delegates seem to have a great amount of faith in the work of the Advisory Committee system.

A policy resolution must be clear, concise and coherent thought. The resolution must be checked for redundancy and should not duplicate or conflict with an existing policy. FFB policy must come from active members. While Staff cannot create policy they are a valuable resource for producers and can help you put your thoughts on paper.

For more information, please contact Jaime Jerrels at 352-384-2654 or jaime.jerrels@ffbf.org.