

NFU Statement of Purpose

INTRODUCTION:

This statement of policy endeavours to sketch in broad outline the purposes and goals of this great farmers' organization.

Our movement is based on a foundation of understanding. It is an understanding that highlights the positive concepts and needs that will unite us as farmers; for understanding follows learning, and we are learning that as farmers we hold a common stake in the welfare of one another and our nation. We are learning that the pursuit of only individual self-interest leads inevitably to self-destruction. We are learning that the society in which we live and toil is exploitive in nature and the power of abundance we possess is widely subjected to economic exploitation to our disadvantage.

The common hope and aspiration of us all is that the creative power farmers possess may be a blessing to humanity and not a curse. It is our hope and aspiration that our families may live in dignity and prosperity - that we may, as farmers, live in harmony with one another and that all the world's people may live in peace.

PURPOSE NO. 1:

We must address ourselves to the solving of human problems created in a technological age. Our capacity for food production is functioning at less than maximum, while malnutrition and poverty continue to prevail in large sectors of the Canadian population and in much of the world.

Forecasts indicate a population of six billion by the year 2,000, while millions of the world's people daily live in hunger. We bear the burden of a productive ability in food supply that is an embarrassment to our nation. The moral obligation felt by farm people in developing a distribution system for food that can offset the growing threat of world hunger and poverty must be shared by all Canadians. We must, as a nation, overcome the narrower consideration of world economics and political shortcomings in order that food may be used for the relief of human suffering and establishment of world peace.

PURPOSE NO. 2:

We believe in the maintenance of a strong rural community in Canada as an essential part of our national culture and that farmers must continue to hold a distinct place in the national identity as the basic producers of food. The ability to produce foodstuffs in mass quantity is increasingly resulting in the encroachment into the production area by corporate structures possessing market control. The competitive forces of integrated food production industries can, we believe, in stages destroy the principles of farm production, based on the individual management, ownership and/or control of productive resources by farm people.

The production of food must be considered as serving the national interest of Canada. It is the product of the soil which is a great natural resource. The primary production of food is the largest of our national industries, still within the realm of Canadian economic and political control. We believe it must remain Canadian. It is in the best interests of our nation to maintain a sound rural community on the strength of an efficient and economic farming industry, and broadly based ownership and/or control by farm families of the basic resources for food production.

PURPOSE NO. 3:

We live in an organized society. Organization implies discipline of action among the members of a group in society who share common interests and goals. Such discipline is widely exercised to the disadvantage of farmers in commerce and trade through the existence of a managed market system and administered price structure by the corporate industrial complex, both in terms of the goods and services purchased by farmers and in the sale of farm products. As a result of the total control over the terms and conditions of trade vested in the corporate sector, vast inefficiencies exist within it, including duplication of services, under-utilization of plants and facilities and technical obsolescence, which force upon farmers demands for even greater efficiencies of production and narrowing margins of return.

As individuals, farmers can exert no real influence in the market place. As individuals, farmers often disadvantage and exploit one another.

Farmers must organize and bargain collectively as farmers to bring about the degree of discipline and organization necessary to make them an effective countervailing force in our society.

PURPOSE NO. 4:

No force in our society can match the power possessed collectively by farmers. Food production is an absolute essential. Farmers are entitled to a fair return on their labours and investment. Action follows organization. Farmers must learn to live with one another rather than off one another. Through mutual co-operation and collective action, farmers can exercise the bargaining power that comes with organization.

PURPOSE NO. 5:

Government holds a heavy responsibility toward determining the structure of food production in this nation by the philosophical approach reflected through legislation and public policy. Farmers must exert every legitimate means of assisting our legislators in providing legislation that can assure equity for farmers and the survival of a flourishing rural community in Canada.

The development and promotion of sound farm policies by farmers upon governments is essential to the future welfare of farming.