

National Farmers Union General Resolutions 2024

1. Cost Accounting for Biofuels

WHEREAS using land for growing crops to produce ethanol biofuel has been the fastest growing agricultural land use in Ontario over the past two decades; and,

WHEREAS the Federal government wants to significantly increase biofuel use to meet emission targets;

WHEREAS growth of crops for biofuels and non-food purposes is contributing to the expansion of intensive monoculture production, leading to soil degradation, and biodiversity loss, and

WHEREAS federal policy and regulation related to biofuels explicitly ignore the impact of this expansion and intensification of agricultural land use on greenhouse gas emissions and the natural environment.

BE IT RESOLVED that the NFU advocate that all appropriate levels of government and academia gather data to assess the extent to which existing and planned agricultural land use for biofuels increases the expansion and intensification of agricultural land use, and impacts ecosystem functions and services;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NFU recommend a best estimate for the indirect impacts of biofuel production and use on GHG emissions, soil health, water retention, and biodiversity;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the NFU develops strategies on how indirect agricultural land use impacts can be accounted for in environmental policy and regulations, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED the NFU pursue strategic partnerships with ECCC [Environment and Climate Change Canada] and others, to educate the Canadian public about the interconnection between biofuel regulations, food and land pricing, power structures in farming, and the conversion of new land into cropland as land uses intensify.

Submitted by Region 3

2. Public Plant Breeding Advocacy

WHEREAS, there is continual pressure to reduce funding and support for public plant breeding within the Canadian government; and

WHEREAS public plant breeding has developed varieties which have improved the Canadian economy (for every \$1 million invested in the Crop Development Centre's plant breeding program in Saskatchewan, the benefit to farmers is \$7.1 million); and,

WHEREAS there is a lack of awareness in the general public on the importance of public plant breeding.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the NFU advocate for the establishment of a national day for public plant breeding to educate and secure continuous support and funding for strong, public plant breeding in Canada.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NFU find like-minded allies to support a Public Plant Breeding advocacy day in Canada.

Submitted by Region 5

3. Standardized Grain Contracts

WHEREAS grain contracts supplied by elevator companies contain lots of fine print and largely favour grain companies when disputes between producers and elevator companies arise,

BE IT RESOLVED that the NFU work on and collaborate with other organizations to create a standardized grain contract that would apply to the major grain and oilseeds deliveries.

Submitted by Region 5

4. Sustainable Aviation Fuel

WHEREAS Commercial aviation is one of the most energy intensive sectors and that aviation driven by the combustion of fuels is inherently unsustainable; and

WHEREAS over 60 airlines operating in Canada are building a coalition of industry stakeholders and government to accelerate the commercial production and use of “sustainable aviation fuels (SAF)” in Canada; and

WHEREAS the Indirect emissions from land use change (iLUC), are not accounted for in calculating the lifecycle carbon intensity of a fuel at this time by the federal regulations’; and

WHEREAS the commodification of farmland and the limited number of available acres mean that expansion of broad acre production to support SAF inevitably means less area for the production of food.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NFU publicly state that commercial aviation driven by combustion of any sustainable aviation fuel (SAF or conventional) is unsustainable;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NFU lobby all government departments to increase pollution pricing on aviation fuels to reflect the social cost of its dangerous pollution and constrain growth in the sector;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NFU advocate for alternative (low emission) public transportation and public high-speed data connectivity in rural and remote areas to displace the demand for commercial air travel;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NFU lobby all government departments to include all direct and indirect emissions related to the production of all biofuels, particularly SAF (including land use change emissions) in any calculations of lifecycle carbon intensity;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NFU advocate, and lead by example, to reduce commercial air travel.

Submitted by Region 6

5. Solidarity with Cuba

WHEREAS Canadians have numerous and significant economic, historical and cultural ties with Cuba;

WHEREAS the developments of Cuba's biotechnology sector in the creation of vaccines and agricultural innovations can benefit Canadian farmers in promoting local, sustainable and resilient farming models; and

WHEREAS the international community, including Canada, has repeatedly shown its support for the Cuban people, particularly through votes at the United Nations General Assembly; and,

WHEREAS the longstanding US economic blockade of Cuba has led to severe resource shortages that affect the daily lives of Cubans,

WHEREAS the American economic sanctions and the economic blockade against Cuba violate international law, as well as the right to self-determination and the human rights of the Cuban people.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NFU call upon the Canadian Government to:

1. Ask United States representatives, through the Minister of Foreign Affairs, to lift the blockade against Cuba as well as to remove Cuba from the list of state sponsors of terrorism;
2. Reaffirm the importance of the Cuban people's human rights and denounce the blockade against Cuba as one of the key barriers to the Cuban people's full enjoyment of their human rights; and
3. Ensure that Canadian relations with Cuba continue to be based on equality and respect for sovereignty, independence and the right to self-determination.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the NFU organize, through Amistur Cuba's specialized tourism agency, a humanitarian educational tour of NFU members to visit sites of urban and sustainable agriculture, permaculture, and agricultural cooperative farms in Cuba.

Submitted by Region 7

6. Divest from Military Technology, Invest in Food Sovereignty

WHEREAS the Canadian government is bound by a commitment to NATO and NORAD to allocate Canadian federal tax dollars to support these international commitments; and,

WHEREAS provincial governments have no such obligation to spend tax dollars on the military; tax dollars that could be invested in programs which support food sovereignty and food security,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NFU advocate for provincial governments to divest from surveillance and military technology, research, and manufacturing; and invest in agricultural programs and food sovereignty instead.

Submitted by Region 7

7. Pension for All Farmers

WHEREAS many direct market farmers are landless and do not have access to the equity generated by land ownership; and,

WHEREAS despite producing significant amounts of food and employment, these farmers generate a small net income that will likely never allow them to purchase land, generate savings or maximise pension contributions,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NFU initiate discussion groups to explore the feasibility of a national farmer pension plan so that landless farmers can remain producing food and employment and be able to afford retirement.

Submitted by Region 7

8. Differentiated Poultry and Egg Production

WHEREAS regulation and policy regarding quota distribution, minimum quota amounts, quota-exempt production limits and new entrant opportunities vary greatly across the country; and,

WHEREAS there is a growing movement of small-scale and diversified farmers in Canada developing and serving niche markets with differentiated poultry and egg products; and,

WHEREAS provincial supply management frameworks do not provide an adequate path to growth for these farmers, limiting economic opportunities and reducing consumer choice; and,

WHEREAS the NFU believes that the supply management system is capable of responding to these farmers' aspirations in a constructive manner that will strengthen Canada's food system and its orderly marketing frameworks; and,

WHEREAS the NFU Policy Book already supports policy and public education efforts aimed at making space for small flock chicken and egg producers within supply management (policies I-3-31 & I-3-32);

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the NFU build an interprovincial coalition of farmers and farm advocacy organizations to develop and advocate for recommendations that can be implemented within the supply management system to promote a path to growth for differentiated poultry and egg production.

Submitted by Region 8