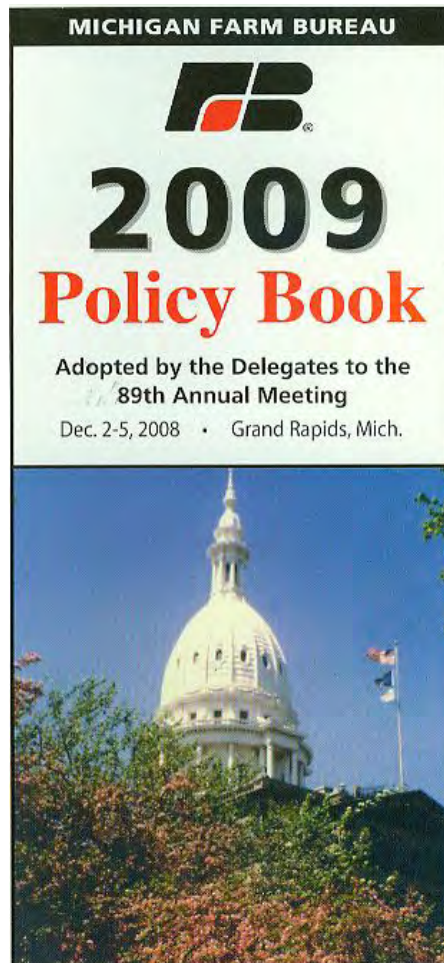


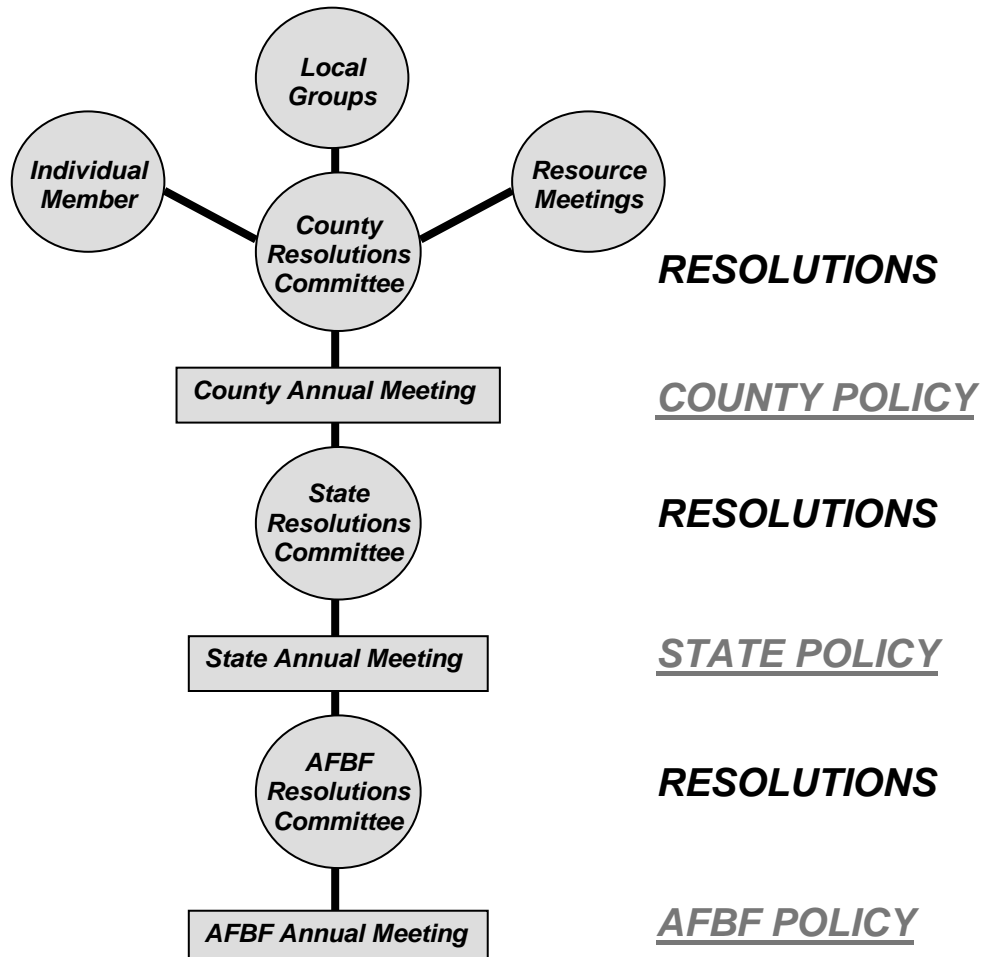
Farm Bureau Policy Development

County Committee Resource Guide

***FARM BUREAU POLICY.
GRASSROOTS DRIVEN. MEMBER DEVELOPED.
PROVEN SUCCESSFUL.***



The Policy Development Process



<p><i>Recommendations from members, Community Groups, Young Farmers, Commodity committees, and other county Farm Bureau committees</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">→</p>	<p><i>County Farm Bureau Policy Development Committee reviews recommendations and develop proposed policies</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">→</p>	<p><i>Members attend County Annual Meeting where they debate and vote on proposed policies</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">→</p> <p><i>Decisions on local issues give Farm Bureau policies on county issues</i></p>	<p><i>Recommendations on state and national/international issues go to Michigan Farm Bureau Policy Development Committee</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">→</p>
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<p><i>Proposed policies on state and national/international issues go to Michigan Farm Bureau Annual Meeting where delegates debate and vote</i></p> <p><i>Decisions on state issues result in Michigan Farm Bureau policies</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">→</p>	<p><i>Policy recommendations on national/international issues go to American Farm Bureau Policy Development Committee</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">→</p>	<p><i>Proposed policies on national/international issues go to American Farm Bureau Federation Convention where delegates debate and vote</i></p> <p><i>Decisions on national/international issues give Farm Bureau policies on national/international issues</i></p>
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2009 Policy Development Planner

January 10-13, 2010.....AFBF Annual Meeting
 December 1-4 2009.....MFB Annual Meeting
 October 27-29, 2009.....MFB Policy Development – final meeting

Deadlines:

Within 3 days of your county annual meetingCounty recommendations due to MFB
 October 9, 2009Last day for county resolutions to be submitted to MFB

_____ County Annual Meeting
 date

_____ All resolutions finished and proofread
 date

_____ Resolutions submitted to the County Administrative Manager for
 Annual Meeting booklet
 date

County Policy Development Meetings

1, _____
 date time location

	<u>Purpose / Issue</u>	<u>Resource Person</u>
1.		
2.		
3.		

1, _____
 date time location

	<u>Purpose / Issue</u>	<u>Resource Person</u>
1.		
2.		
3.		

Where Can Our Committee Find Resources?

MFB Website

The MFB website has a comprehensive section dedicated to Policy Development, complete with access to the AFBF and MFB current policy books, backgrounder sheets on probable issues, resource material for county PD Committees, information regarding the grassroots process, information on your State MFB PD Committee, an electronic issues survey, an instructional PD video, and information regarding county annual meetings. Go to: <http://www.michfb.com/policy/development>

MFB Policy Book

Each committee member receives a copy of the current MFB policy book, and this serves as an excellent resource to see if current issues are already covered, and for areas where policy may need updates. It is also available electronically, 24-7 on the MFB website at:

<http://www.michfb.com/policy/book>

AFBF Policy Book

The current AFBF policy book serves as an excellent resource on national issues, to see if current issues are already covered, and for areas where policy may need updates. It is also available electronically, 24-7 on the MFB website at:

<http://www.michfb.com/pdfs/policy/2009%20AFBF%20Policy%20Book.pdf>

AFBF Website

Information regarding American Farm Bureau's priority issues and backgrounders related to those issues can be found at <http://www.fb.org/index.php?fuseaction=issues.home>

Local Issues

Local elected officials such as township supervisors & trustees, county commissioners, Sheriff, drain commissioners, road commissioners, school officials, zoning and planning boards, etc., can be an excellent resource for a local PD meeting to surface discussion on local issues of importance in the county. Consider hosting them for an informal discussion at one of your committee meetings. Find more information on your local elected officials at <http://www.michfb.com/legislative/action>

Information Sources

Make use of various sources of information such as the Michigan Farm News, AFBF News, minutes from Community Action Groups in your county, county publications, MSU and USDA publications, farm and commodity specific magazines, newspapers, etc. **Some county Farm Bureau Boards also keep a monthly "Issues" folder with information on issues discussed at monthly board meetings.** Contact your county Administrative Manager for more details on whether your county board does this.

MFB Policy Development Staff Contacts

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HOW TO WRITE A RESOLUTION

The framework of the following sample may be useful in writing county resolutions.

State subject of the resolution ----- TRESPASSING

Define the problem ----- Damage to property by trespassers has become a serious problem in _____ County.

Tell what it means to the county or community ----- Each year, thousands of dollars worth of damage is done to rural property in this county by some irresponsible hunters, fisherman and others who come upon private property, kill livestock, damage fences, leave gates open, trample crops, steal and even endanger human life.

Explain why action is wanted----- Experience has shown that our property owners are almost helpless in doing anything about this situation. We are informed that the present trespassing laws are not sufficient to deal with this problem.

Summarize what is proposed to be done ----- We believe that a person should have written permission before entering private property. Many of the farmers in this county will give permission to hunt, fish or picnic on their land if they are asked. They resent persons using their property without permission.

Utilizing the above resolution framework, a county resolution, such as the example above, may result in the following:

TRESPASS

Farmers are concerned with the increasing disregard for private property rights by trespassers and the inability or unwillingness of local authorities to protect such rights. We will support an amendment to the current trespass law that would authorize all law enforcement officials to arrest without a warrant or complaint any person who does not have written permission from the property owner or lessee.

Make Sure Your Resolutions Say and Do What you Want Them to!

• Some Examples of Unclear or Incomplete Submitted Resolutions •

We support updating the Right to Farm Act under the provisions of HB 4300.
(What if the bill number or content changes? What concepts do you support?)

We support the Plant Initiative at MSU.
(What is the Plant Initiative? Why is it good or bad?)

Be it resolved, we favor eliminating the Single Business Tax.
(How much revenue would be cut? How much would farmers save? Why?)

Be it resolved, we support a flat rate income tax plan.
(State or national resolution? Does this include a percent on the first dollar of income?
What if the rate is 25%?)

*As long as the Governor has line-item veto, we hold the Governor responsible for a
balanced budget by voting all pork barrel spending.*
(Define pork. Is PA 116 or disaster assistance a pork barrel project? By voting support
of ? Or Vetoing?)

*We would like the State Legislature to address the issue of who is responsible to
remove dead animals weighing over 30 pounds from the roads.*
(Should the landowner or the person who hit the animal be responsible? At what cost,
and who should pay?)

We support an increase in the state gasoline tax of no more than 6 cents per gallon.
(What if a 7 cent proposal is introduced? What if the money is earmarked for use other
than roads?)

*We urge the MFB AgriPac to complete its endorsement procedure 90 days before the
current county recommendation deadline. (Do you really want AgriPac to make a
decision before the CFB's send in their recommendations?)*

POLICY DEVELOPMENT RESOLUTIONS WORKSHEET

Local ____
State ____
National ____

1.) Title: _____

2.) Problem: _____

3.) Impact or Cost: _____

4.) Need: _____

5.) Solution:

We: Support _____

Oppose _____

Favor _____

Recognize _____

Urge _____

Encourage _____

Believe _____

Recommend _____

Commend _____

We will: Continue _____

Defend _____

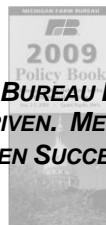
Work _____

A Checklist for Policy Resolutions that Work

1. *Clear and concise*
2. *Significant agricultural impact*
3. *Provides direction and allows flexibility*
4. *Identifies / describes issue or problem*
5. *Develops solution or alternatives to issue or problem*
6. *Resolution is cost-effective and attainable*

Consider the following questions when determining if your resolutions are core to the agricultural industry and enhance the interests of Farm Bureau members. These questions are intended to aid in evaluating your resolutions. There is no correct answer.

- Is this a core ag issue? Does this issue have a broad-based impact on Michigan agriculture?*
- Does the issue directly impact the profitability and viability of farming in Michigan?*
- Is this an issue in which MFB would be the lead organization in advancing the cause/resolving the problem?*
- Would the Legislature/State government, etc. come to MFB for direction on this issue?*
- Is another organization better suited to take the lead on the issue?*
- Every organization has limited resources – is working this issue how you would choose to spend MFB's staff resources?*
- Would a majority of our membership vote to increase dues to address this issue if additional resources were needed?*
- Is this resolution being proposed for the primary benefit of an organization other than Michigan Farm Bureau?*
- Is this really a local issue?*



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Effective County Annual Meetings

CREATING DISCUSSION ON RESOLUTIONS AT THE COUNTY FARM BUREAU ANNUAL MEETING

PLAN AHEAD!

- ❑ *Send copies of the proposed resolutions to be voted on at the annual meeting out to your membership prior to the meeting for their review.*
- ❑ *Include summary statements about the policies that will be discussed on your annual meeting notice or invitation.*
- ❑ *Send copies of the proposed resolutions to your board of directors, community action groups and various county Farm Bureau committees, asking those members to come to the annual meeting prepared to discuss the issues.*

AT THE MEETING

The following techniques could be used to involve members in discussing resolutions presented by the Policy Development committee at the County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting.

- ❑ *If a resolution surfaced from a specific member, Community Action Group, etc., after the resolution has been read by the Policy Development Committee, ask the member, Community Action Group, etc. to comment on its importance.*
- ❑ *If a resolution addresses an issue of a specific commodity, call on two or three producers of the commodity who are present at the County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting to give their opinion of the resolution.*
- ❑ *If a meal is served prior to the business meeting, assign each table a specific resolution to talk about during the meal and be prepared to make comments when it is read during the report of resolutions. Each table could be assigned more than one specific resolution.*
- ❑ *Before the resolutions report is given at the County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting, break the members attending into 4-5 subgroups and ask them to go to separate areas of the meeting facility to discuss specific resolutions. Have a committee member or resource persons present at each subgroup who can provide information and answer questions about each resolution assigned to the subgroup. When the subgroups have met and the resolutions are read for final action, ask a person from each subgroup to comment on their discussion and recommendation, including amendments, for each assigned resolution.*

REAFFIRMATION PROCEDURE

Many county Farm Bureau Policy Development Committees choose to do their reaffirmations in blocks, and simply read the title of the resolution. They then call for a vote on a block of reaffirmations at a time, and take any questions, discussion, etc. on the whole block. This speeds up the PD portion of the meeting and allows for more time to be spent on the new resolutions.

Introduction of PD Process at County Farm Bureau Annual Meeting

Policy Development Chair or County President:

We now will proceed with the policy development portion of our annual meeting. As you may or may not know, the development of policy by our members gives our organization direction for the year. Tonight you will have the opportunity to discuss a number of issues your policy development committee has spent many hours researching and drafting resolutions on.

These resolutions become the platform for our organization and the basis for the positions we take on every issue we work on. The resolutions you pass tonight will be used in many ways: Local resolutions will be presented by our County Farm Bureau to the appropriate local officials to make them aware of our position; State and National resolutions will be sent on to the State Policy Development Committee who will review each and every resolution that comes from the counties, and prepare a report of resolutions to be considered by the voting delegates at our state Farm Bureau annual meeting in November; The National resolutions adopted at our state annual meeting will then be passed on to the American Farm Bureau for consideration at their annual meeting.

The policy book (hold up a copy of the Michigan Farm Bureau and/or American Farm Bureau policy books) is the result of our hard work here tonight and contains policy written by and voted on by you. If you believe Farm Bureau needs to take a different stand on an issue, then tonight is your opportunity to affect that process.

Please take this opportunity to think about these issues being brought before you tonight, and participate in the discussion. Raise your hand or come to the microphone if you have a question or an idea you'd like considered. Would the Policy Development committee please join me at the front for consideration of the 2007 proposed resolutions?

IDENTIFYING POTENTIAL DELEGATES TO THE MFB ANNUAL MEETING

Questions To Ask

The following are a series of questions that your county Farm Bureau might use in determining who might best represent your county's interests at the Michigan Farm Bureau annual meeting. These questions are based on a review of the delegate survey completed at the 2004 annual meeting. If the majority of questions are answered yes, the member is probably a highly qualified delegate to represent your county's interests.

- Is the member a full-time (40hrs/wk) farmer?*
- Is the member a part-time farmer actively involved in farm management, and/or the industry?*
- Has the member served on the county or state PD committee?*
- Is the member able to set personal interests aside & provide input/discussion in an unbiased way representing the interests of your county farm bureau?*
- Did the member attend the county annual meeting?*
- Is the member committed to devoting the time necessary to prepare for the state annual in advance?*
- Can the member attend the entire delegate session?*



So you want
to be a delegate...



For more information about being a delegate, go to
<http://www.michfb.com/policy/delegates>

Click on the PDF brochure on "So you want to be a Delegate"