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Alliance Unveils Unprecedented Climate Policy Recommendations
*Agriculture and environmental groups find ways that farmers, ranchers, forest owners
and food sector can deliver and benefit from climate solutions*

WASHINGTON, November 17, 2020 – An alliance of groups representing farmers, forest owners, the food sector, state governments and environmental advocates today unveiled an unprecedented set of recommendations to guide the development of federal climate policy.

The Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance (FACA) was formed in February 2020 by four groups that now co-chair the alliance: American Farm Bureau Federation, Environmental Defense Fund, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, and National Farmers Union. The alliance has since expanded to include FMI – The Food Industry Association, National Alliance of Forest Owners, National Association of State Departments of Agriculture, and The Nature Conservancy.

Together, the group developed more than 40 recommendations based on three principles: agricultural and forestry climate policies must be built upon voluntary, incentive-based programs and market-driven opportunities; they must promote resilience and adaptation in rural communities; and they must be science-based. These recommendations share an overarching goal to do no harm. Climate policies will impact farmers, forest owners, ranchers, rural and limited-resources communities, wildlife and natural resources and must be thoughtfully crafted to account for any potential inequities, consequences and tradeoffs.

“We are proud to have broken through historical barriers to form this unique alliance focused on climate policy,” said Zippy Duvall, FACA Co-chair and President of the American Farm Bureau Federation. “We began discussions not knowing whether we would ultimately reach agreement. It was important to me to reject punitive climate policy ideas of the past in favor of policies that respect farmers and support positive change. Our final recommendations do just that.”

“The wide array of perspectives represented in this group — farmers, ranchers, forest owners and environmental advocates — sends a powerful message to Capitol Hill about the urgent need for bipartisan climate legislation,” said Fred Krupp, FACA Co-Chair and President of Environmental Defense Fund. “More resilient farms and forests protect the agricultural economy, reduce risk from the climate impacts that are already here and help prevent worsening climate impacts in the future.”

FACA Co-chair Chuck Conner, President of the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, said, “Much as a farmer co-op gets its strength from uniting many producers to achieve a single goal, so too does FACA. Through FACA, the food, forestry and agriculture sectors can speak with a single voice on climate and, leveraging the unique perspectives and special talents

of its members, help drive the conversation about the role that the food, forestry and agriculture sector can play in addressing climate policy.”

Rob Larew, FACA Co-chair and President of National Farmers Union, said, “Climate change is adding another enormous variable to the already unpredictable work of farming. Every year, farmers face more frequent and severe weather events, making it just that much harder to make a profit. There are concrete actions farmers can take to build resilience to weather extremes and pull carbon out of the atmosphere, but they need strong policy behind them. The recommendations we’ve compiled are a good place to start.”

Overview of climate policy recommendations

- Provide voluntary, incentive-based tools and additional technical assistance for farmers, ranchers and foresters to maximize the sequestration of carbon and the reduction of other greenhouse gas emissions, and increase climate resilience.
- Foster the development of private sector GHG markets. The public sector should ensure that verifiable reductions occur and provide farmers and forest owners with the technical support needed to participate.
- Use an array of public and private sector tools to incentivize agricultural and forestry producers to prioritize and scale climate-smart practices.
- Incentivize farmers to reduce energy consumption and increase on-farm renewable energy production, and make continued progress toward reducing the lifecycle GHG emissions of agriculture- and forestry-based renewable energy.
- Reduce the GHG impact of food waste and loss by streamlining confusing consumer-facing packaging and implementing a public-private partnership to achieve a meaningful and workable food date-labeling program.
- Increase federal investment in agriculture, forestry and food-related research substantially and continuously.

Read the full recommendations at www.agclimatealliance.com. They cover six areas of focus: soil health, livestock and dairy, forests and wood products, energy, research, and food loss and waste.

The alliance welcomes additional members. Email inquires@agclimatealliance.com with questions about membership or our climate policy recommendations.