



Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association

An association of commercial vegetable, potato and berry growers.

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Federal Legislative Priorities for 2021

The Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association is an association of commercial vegetable, potato and berry growers with over 700 members representing an industry that annually produces crops valued at over \$147 million on 3,950 farms with 50,000 acres of farmland across the Commonwealth.

Labor

Immigration and Farm Labor Reform – Our members regularly list immigration reform and labor availability as one of their main legislative concerns. Our growers need an affordable and dependable labor supply to stay in business. We need immigration reform that creates a legal labor force with reasonable verification requirements. A mandatory E-verify bill without a workable agricultural guest program would be disastrous for American agriculture.

Card Check – We are opposed to the elimination of the secret ballot for employees in deciding on union representation and to mandatory arbitration to resolve failed union and employer contract negotiations.

Environmental

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Regulations – Local governments are imposing burdensome costs on Pennsylvania farms as they seek to cover their costs of complying with this federal mandate.

Food Safety

Food Safety Modernization Act – Water Use Rule – We support safe food production systems, but these mandates should not be so burdensome so as to prevent our small growers from competing in the marketplace for negligible improvement in food safety.

Appropriations

Specialty Crop Funding – The Specialty Crop Block Grants have been a major source of funding for our industry's promotion and research activities. These funds need to be maintained.

Land Grant Agricultural Research and Extension Funding – Federal funding of these key agricultural support programs has continued to dwindle. Farmers depend on the research and extension activities of their land grant institutions.

Nutrition Funding - The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program for Women, Infant, Children clients and senior citizens is of great benefit to both of these groups and our growers.

Taxes and Health Care Costs

Health Insurance - Most of our members are self-employed and/or small employers. Spiraling health insurance costs threaten their ability to expand or even maintain their operations.

Business Depreciation Deduction Limit (Section 179) – This limit needs to remain at least at \$500,000.

Inheritance Tax – This tax should be eliminated.

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2021 Policy Resolutions

The Members of the Association recently adopted these additions to our Policy Resolutions putting the Association on record as:

Federal and State Resolutions

1. *Supporting research to combat new emerging pests (e.g., Brown Marmorated Stink Bug, the Spotted Wing Drosophila Fruit Fly, Bermuda Grass Stem Maggots, the Spotted Lanternfly, etc.).*
2. *Supporting efforts to have all 48 contiguous states develop a reciprocal agreement regarding their farm plate registrations and to have at least Pennsylvania pursue such agreements with neighboring states.*
3. *Supporting incentives and support be given to utilities to offer three-phase power to farm operations at a more reasonable cost.*

Federal Resolutions

1. *Supporting efforts to harmonize food safety audits with what is required under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) to reduce duplication.*

The Association's complete Policy Resolutions are available at www.pvga.org