



Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association

An association of commercial vegetable, potato and berry growers.

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Federal Legislative Priorities for 2023

The Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association is an association of commercial vegetable, potato and berry growers with about 800 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 an improved agricultural guest worker (H-2A) program would be disastrous for American agriculture.

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 \$1,000,000.

Inheritance Tax – This tax should be eliminated

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2023 New Policy Resolutions

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

Federal Resolutions

1. Supporting changes to permitting requirements for conservation projects to allow projects less than \$100,000 to be certified by a design professional.
2. Supporting the continuation of USDA's Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).
3. Supporting the continuation of USDA's Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program (LFPA).
4. Supporting an exemption for farmers or farm workers from the need to be Haz-Mat certified to transport herbicides, insecticides, etc. between farms or return empty containers provided the farmer or farm worker has had training through a private pesticide applicator's license update or other educational program.

Federal and State Resolutions

5. Supporting the ability to take Section 179 deductions for ag equipment in the year in which the equipment is ordered and paid for.
6. Supporting a change in the due dates for quarterly state and federal tax payments to be April 15th, July 15th, October 15th and January 15th to represent true quarterly payments.