



2017 Federal Legislative Priorities

The Minnesota AgriGrowth Council works aggressively on behalf of its members in Washington DC, both in promoting new initiatives and reacting to challenges.

These federal legislative priorities are based on an assessment of AgriGrowth member interest, informed by discussions that occurred during regional meetings around Minnesota as well as other membership interaction. The priority list does not reflect the entire scope of AgriGrowth's anticipated activities during the 2017 session of Congress and the list may be modified as new issues arise during the year.

Trade

U.S. and global trade are greatly affected by the growth and stability of world markets including changes in world population, economic growth, and income. With 95% of the world's consumers living outside the United States and the productivity of U.S. agriculture growing faster than domestic food and fiber demand, U.S. farmers and agricultural firms rely heavily on export markets to sustain prices and revenues. AgriGrowth supports efforts by the United States government to reduce trade barriers and expand existing trade agreements and the opening of new international trade opportunities in foreign markets for U.S. commodities and food products.

Immigration Reform

Immigration reform is particularly important to Minnesota's agricultural sector and outstate employers. Minnesota continues to struggle with agriculture workforce shortages. Because of this shortage, agriculture employers are becoming more reliant on workers who come to Minnesota from outside of our country. Providing a sustainable workforce for Minnesota's agriculture sector is critical to our state and our nation's economic prosperity. AgriGrowth supports federal efforts that provide meaningful legislative solutions to agriculture's worker shortage.

GMO Labeling

AgriGrowth remains an ardent supporter of agriculture biotechnology and supports the recently passed federal legislation referred to as the Safe and Affordable Food Labeling Act. This legislation blocks states from passing or enacting their own laws to label genetically modified organisms, and directs USDA to write rules establishing a national standard for how genetically engineered products are labeled. AgriGrowth will continue to engage our federal delegation and the USDA as the agency begins implementation of this legislation.

Waters of the United States

Minnesota has extensive water protection programs and regulations. Our agriculture industry is dedicated to protecting the natural resources of our state; however, the Waters of the United States rule is an unprecedented expansion of federal authority that offers little benefit to the environment, while adding new layers of regulatory burden on farmers, ranchers, and agribusinesses. AgriGrowth opposes this rule as it will require new permitting, increased regulation, and places new financial burdens on Minnesota agriculture producers and businesses.

Federal Tax Policy/Reform

AgriGrowth supports Congressional efforts to reform and simplify the federal tax code, including the reduction of corporate tax rates which currently put U.S. firms at a competitive disadvantage relative to their foreign peers.