

## Special Consensus Report



# The Voter

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters  
of Bowling Green, Ohio  
Supplement to April 2014

PO Box 873, Bowling Green OH 43402 • [www.wcnet.org/~lwvbg](http://www.wcnet.org/~lwvbg)

### *Snapshots: Inside the consensus room*



• *A consensus in the making. Anne Bullerjahn records yeas, nays and comments.*



• *Roger Anderson*



• *The patience and good humor of Kristin Vessey facilitated reaching consensus.*



• *Joan Callecot in the foreground with Char and Don Sherer.*

# The Questions



## Economic Health of the Agricultural Sector

1. <i>Should government financial support for agriculture be directed to:</i>	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Subsidized agricultural credit (loans)			X
b) Disaster assistance	X		
c) Crop insurance	X		
d) Farms that supply local and regional markets	X		
e) Subsidized implementation of best management practices	X		
f) Commodity crop programs, e.g., corn, soybeans, sugar, cotton, wheat		X	
g) Commodity livestock program		X	
h) Commodity dairy program		X	
i) Specialty crops, e.g. fruits, vegetables, nuts, etc.	X		
j) Other production methods, e.g. organic, hydroponic, urban, etc. farms	X		
Comments (word limit: 250. Please include the letter(s) associated to the sub-category at the beginning of your comments): a) not enough information e) include accountability and monitoring j) What is the definition of urban farm?			

2. <i>What changes should government make regarding direct payment programs to farm operators?</i> Note: Farm operators can be anything between family farms to huge corporations.	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) <i>Eliminate</i> direct payments to farm operators	X		
b) <i>Update</i> the rules for direct payments to farm operators to support sustainability	X		
c) <i>Broaden</i> the types of farms that are eligible	X		
d) <i>Broaden</i> the types of crops that are eligible	X		
e) Effectively <i>enforce</i> existing rules	X		
Comments (word limit: 250. Please include the letter(s) associated to the sub-category at the beginning of your comments): a) See what happens with the implementation of the 2014 Farm Bill. b) Conditional: support sustainability; no direct payments.			



3. <i>What changes to current crop insurance programs should government make?</i>	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Extend to more types of crops	X		
b) Link to the use of conservation practices	X		
c) Limit insurance for the cultivation of marginal and environmentally sensitive land	X		
d) Cap amount of premium subsidy to a single farm operator (see note in question 2)	X		
Comments (word limit: 250. Please include the letter(s) associated to the sub-category at the beginning of your comments): c) Limit insurance for sensitive land and eliminate insurance for marginal land. d) Define single farm operator.			

4. <i>Should government act on any of the following?</i>	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Revise anti-trust legislation to ensure competitive agricultural markets	X		
b) Enforce anti-trust laws as they relate to agriculture	X		
c) Promote alternative marketing systems, including regional hub markets, farmer cooperatives, farm markets, etc.	X		
Comments (word limit: 250. Please include the letter(s) associated to the sub-category at the beginning of your comments):			

## Animal Management

5. <i>Which of the following approaches to animal management should government achieve?</i>	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Transparently collect and disclose data about regulated animal feeding operations (AFOs) or aquaculture operations and about the health of animals in such regulated operations	X		
b) Apply and enforce existing clean air and clean water regulations to animal or seafood management facilities	X		
Comments (word limit: 250. Please include the letter(s) associated to the sub-category at the beginning of your comments):			

6. <i>Which of the following approaches to animal waste management should government require or bring about?</i>	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Treat animal waste with environmentally sound technologies for all regulated AFOs	X		
b) Prioritize federal funds to mitigate existing environmental challenges (such as Environmental Quality Incentives		X	

Program, cost share, loans, etc.) rather than construction of new facilities			
Comments (word limit: 250. Please include the letter(s) associated to the sub-category at the beginning of your comments): a) Environmentally sound practice is vague. Example: spreading manure in winter vs. summer. b) Pollution costs should be borne by owner/operator.			

## Research and Development

<p>7. Which of the following approaches to research and development (R&amp;D) should government fund or accomplish?</p> <p>Note: For the purpose of these questions and some questions below, “<b>developed using any new technology</b>” or “<b>new technologies</b>” refer to any of many scientific processes for developing new crops or animals with genetic engineering, nanotechnology or other new techniques, which are not the traditional breeding or hybridization techniques.</p>	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Basic research			
b) Independent third-party (such as an academic institution) risk assessment of products <i>developed using any new technology</i>			
c) Research to assess the impacts of <i>new technologies</i> on human health and the environment, prior to their widespread adoption			
d) Research that advances the continuation of diversified and sustainable agricultural systems			
e) Seed banking, research, and other means that promote and preserve genetic diversity			
f) Both transparency in the reporting of research studies related to approval of new products <b>and</b> respect for intellectual property rights of private enterprises engaged in research			
g) Research on long-term effects of new crops, products and processes			
h) Development of new practices and technologies to promote conservation for all types of farms			
Comments (word limit: 250. Please include the letter(s) associated to the sub-category at the beginning of your comments): Question 7a) through h) was not included in our study/consensus.			

## Food Safety

8. Which of the following approaches to food safety should government perform or fund?	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Clarify and enforce pre-market testing requirements for new foods and food additives <i>developed using any new technology</i> (see note below question 7)			
b) Require developers to monitor all food products <i>developed using any new technology</i> after releasing to the market			
c) Withdraw marketing approval if products are shown to be unsafe	X		
d) Require post-market monitoring of approved pharmaceutical applications in animal production for human health and environmental impacts			
e) Require developers of new products to provide data and other materials to independent third-parties (such as academic institutions) for pre- and post-market safety assessment as appropriate			
f) Limit use of antibiotics in animal production to treat and control disease	X		
g) Fund independent third-party (such as academic institutions) risk assessment of long-term and multiple exposures from foods on human health and the environment			
h) Promote crop management practices that decrease dependency on added chemicals (pesticides, herbicides, and synthetic fertilizers)	X		
i) Fund, train and add personnel for assessment and compliance functions of regulatory agencies			
Comments (word limit: 250. Please include the letter(s) associated to the sub-category at the beginning of your comments): c) Safe for whom – animals, babies, children? Question 8a), b), d), e), g), i) were not included in our study/consensus.			

## Food Labeling

9. How sufficient are the following regarding current food labeling?	Insufficient	Sufficient	Too much	No Consensus
a) Nutrition Facts on food labels		X		

b) Nutrition Facts on food labels as a means of consumer education	X			
c) Common allergen labeling		X		
d) Health and ingredient claims that consumers can understand				X
Comments (word limit: 250. Please include the letter(s) associated to the sub-category at the beginning of your comments): c) Continue monitoring d) Question not clear				

<i>10. Which of the following should government achieve regarding marketing and ingredient claims on food labels?</i>	Yes	No	No Consensus
a) Define (and approve for use) health and safety marketing terms (e.g. immunity support, humane, pasture-raised, natural, etc.)	X		
b) Regulate the use of images or other sensory advertising		X	
c) Require that ingredient marketing claims accurately represent what is in the required ingredient list	X		
Comments (word limit: 250. Please include the letter(s) associated to the sub-category at the beginning of your comments):			

<i>11. Recognizing that each food developed using any new technology can be unique, and assuming that required food labeling should be useful to consumers, should the following generalized information relating to how products or components are developed be presented on food labels?</i> See note below question 7. All these questions also assume some percentage threshold of new technology ingredients, such as the 0.9% used in the European Union.				
	Not Recommended	Voluntary	Mandatory	No consensus
a) Contains ingredients developed using any new technology stating which technologies are involved				
b) Does <b>not</b> contain ingredients developed using any new technology				
c) If meat, fish, eggs, or dairy products are from animals that have consumed feed developed using any new technology stating which technologies are involved				
Comments (word limit: 250. Please include the letter(s) associated to the sub-category at the beginning of your comments): Question 11 a) through c) not included in our study/consensus.				