



FLORIDA FARM BUREAU

2018 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



Hurricane Relief

The impacts of the 2017 hurricane season on Florida agriculture were devastating for many growers across the state. Florida Farm Bureau is committed to helping the industry recover from these storms and be better prepared for future weather events. The Legislature can assist in the recovery efforts by:

- Approving temporary and long-term tax exemptions on materials used for repair and recovery, fuel taxes and Tangible Personal Property Taxes
- Allowing short-term loan programs
- Expanding short-term overweight hauling permits
- Formalizing, improving and adequately funding the State Agricultural Response Team

FDACS: Fresh From Florida Funding

Florida Farm Bureau is supporting an increase of **\$5 million in General Revenue** for the Florida Agricultural Marketing Campaign in order to enhance the “Fresh From Florida” brand and help both large and small producers market their products worldwide. Marketing these products is critical to keeping Florida “Ag Strong” as the industry continues to recover from Hurricane Irma.

FDACS: Rural and Family Lands Protection Program Funding

Florida Farm Bureau supports land preservation and conservation through working lands easements that promote sustainable agricultural practices and reasonable protection of our natural resources.

After a \$25 million cut to funding last year and a backlog of more than 230,000 available acres with an estimated cost of \$450 million, Florida Farm Bureau supports Commissioner Putnam’s request to fund the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program at **\$75 million**.

FDACS: Agricultural Water Policy Funding

Florida Farm Bureau and Florida’s agricultural producers work closely and rely on the Office of Ag Water Policy on important methods to improve water quality and water quantity in the state.

FDACS Office of Ag Water Policy budget requests:

- **\$15 million** in the Land Acquisition Trust Fund to address agricultural nutrient reduction and water retention projects in the Lake Okeechobee Watershed.
- **\$10 million** in the Land Acquisition Trust Fund to address agricultural nutrient reduction and water retention projects outside of the Lake Okeechobee Watershed, including the critical spring sheds statewide.
- **\$1.5 million** in General Revenue funding to continue the Ag Water Supply Planning and Conservation Program.



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UF/IFAS Workload Funding

Florida Farm Bureau supports fully funding research, teaching and Extension dollars that are essential to ensuring that Florida farmers remain on the cutting edge of technological advancements, education and resources. UF/IFAS has a specific “Workload” formula or funding model that responds to increased research and Extension workload demand and enables researchers to provide solutions to problems and challenges faced by the agricultural and natural resources communities. The UF/IFAS Workload request is **\$3,705,379** in recurring funds.

UF/IFAS Vetoed Projects

Florida Farm Bureau has been a long-time advocate for the University of Florida's Institute for Food and Agricultural Sciences and the work it does for Florida's agricultural industry. Funding for UF/IFAS and its many projects and programs that impact the entirety of Florida's diverse agricultural community is critical for our state's agricultural producers and the future of agriculture. Last year, more than \$6 million in essential funds were vetoed from the UF/IFAS budget. We support the restoration of funding for these programs which include:

- UF/IFAS 4-H & Family Initiative: **\$1 million**
- Tropical Research & Education Center (TREC): **\$2.5 million**
- Tropical Aquaculture Lab (TAL): **\$700,000**
- UF/IFAS Horticulture, Research, Science & Education and PIE Center: **\$1.45 million**

SB 672/HB 819 – Agricultural-Restricted Truck Tag

This legislation revises the eligibility requirement for the agricultural-restricted license plate by removing the 150-mile radius of its home address restriction and expanding the operation of these restricted license plates to be used throughout the state of Florida. This would create more flexibility and cost savings for farmers and ranchers who haul their own products.

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