

# **TGANC 2015 Proposed Resolutions**

## ***To Be Approved at Annual Meeting, February 6, 2015***

**We believe tobacco production to be essential to the economy and well-being of the people of North Carolina. We further recognize that tobacco plays a vital role in the economy of the United States. In the interest of preserving that contribution, we offer the following resolutions**

1. Recognizing that North Carolina is a “right-to-work” state, we oppose any regulations or sanctions that would cite labor union membership as a absolute requirement for any agricultural laborer, regardless of that workers citizenship status.
2. **We implore all commodity groups and the tobacco leadership groups and governmental entities to come together with commitment and support to resolve the farm worker labor concerns that impact the livelihood of the farm families in North Carolina, including comprehensive immigration reform.**
3. **We encourage all farmers to understand and adhere to the requirements of the Fair Labor Standards Act in regards to lawful employment of any person working on a farm.**
4. **We oppose employment of persons who are not members of the farm family, under the age of 16 working in tobacco production in the United States and abroad.**
5. We oppose detrimental federal intervention, lawsuits and other unwarranted attacks on a legal industry. We recognize that tobacco is a legal commodity representing an extremely large amount of international trade; therefore we insist that all agencies and individuals representing the United States in any area of trade be allowed to promote the high quality, comparative value of U.S. tobacco, including fair treatment in all trade agreements.
6. **We oppose any efforts to unfairly target tobacco as a legal commodity, to be omitted from, or designated differently from other commodities in the ongoing Trans Pacific Trade Partnership (TPP) agreement negotiations.**
7. We are categorically opposed to any trade agreement present in force or being considered in the future that does not include any and all legally grown U.S. agricultural commodities.
8. We call upon tobacco companies that contract with growers to continue to develop policies and practices that are fair and inclusive of all growers with regards to the economic welfare of tobacco producers as a whole.
9. **We oppose multi-tier contract conditions and markets that do not publish a retail price for tobacco that reflects its market value.**
10. We oppose any future increase in the state or federal excise tax on tobacco products.
11. We further recommend that our Association and other tobacco supportive organizations continue to publicize the economic benefits of tobacco to our nation’s policy makers in terms of jobs and tax revenue.
12. We applaud the efforts of North Carolina State University Extension Research Service for managing and directing an appropriate research program that enhances the profitability of growing and marketing tobacco.
13. **We support the creation and funding of the W.K. Collins Agronomy Endowment to provide for at least two permanent tobacco specific positions at NC State University.**
14. We applaud the Tobacco Industry and related agribusiness for cooperating in the development of research programs and providing financial support for tobacco research.
15. We request that the North Carolina General Assembly provide the necessary funding support for the N.C. Department of Agriculture to serve the citizens of our state.
16. We request the North Carolina General Assembly recognize the economic value of budgeting research funds for tobacco and stipulate that funding provided for the Academic, Extension and Research Budgets of the College of Agriculture at NC State University be used for such designated purposes.
17. We are concerned that essentially no new funds are allocated by the Agricultural Research Service of USDA for tobacco research. We believe this is discriminatory to tobacco farmers and specifically request that additional funds be allocated for regional research on tobacco based upon the enormous

tax contribution this industry makes to our governmental budgets. This is especially true as we continue to await FDA regulatory authority.

18. We request that NCDA continue working to devise a method to forecast intended planting and actual planted acres of tobacco for each current crop year.
- 19. We support the vote by growers in 2015 to continue with a check-off for tobacco research and extension.**
20. We are opposed to additional legislation and regulation that would restrict when and where adults choose to smoke.
21. We support the Plant Industry Division of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture in maintaining its "Apparent Freedom" status of enforcing those regulations relative to requiring zero (0) tolerance of any pest on any agricultural, horticultural, floral, or nursery plants imported to North Carolina.
22. We support tobacco growers and purchasers to collectively develop strategies, systems, and procedures that will enhance the integrity and quality of flue-cured and burley tobacco and reduce the cost of marketing.
23. We request that the USDA-FSA and USDA-NRCS be more sensitive to the need for a more common sense approach to the enforcement of rules as stated in the Foods Securities Act of 1985, i.e. Sodbuster, Wetlands, and Conservation Compliance. We further request that said rules be interpreted uniformly on a county-by-county basis and that penalties be applied on each individual tract basis.
24. We request that the Environmental Protection Agency and the FDA refrain from acting in a discriminatory manner with respect to the approval for labeling of pesticides for use on tobacco.
25. We insist that all lending practices of the Agricultural Credit Division of the Farm Service Agency be fair, equitable, and timely to all applicants.
26. We support individual property rights for all agricultural enterprises, provided they meet all County, State, and Federal regulations.
27. We implore all tobacco interest and tobacco communities to come together with commitment and support to solve the issues and problems that threaten the economic contributions of tobacco to our state, our nation and our growers.
28. We are opposed to the use of any tax dollars being allocated to any agency whose agenda is aimed toward the detriment of the tobacco industry.
29. TGANC recognizes the importance of sound and prudent credit policy. We encourage banks, agricultural credit associations and any other public, private and governmental entities that provide credit to farmers and agribusinesses to be cognizant of changes that occur within the agricultural community. We encourage such institutions to continue to find ways to provide both long and short-term credit.
30. We encourage the Golden Leaf Foundation, which was formed to distribute 50% of North Carolina's MSA proceeds to tobacco dependent Communities, to recognize that the most effective means of revitalizing these communities is to employ the infrastructure that already exists, and is based on a tobacco farming economy.
- 31. We presently oppose the commercialization of tobacco cultivars for traditional uses whose genetic makeup has been modified with non-tobacco genes. We feel that such cultivars should be limited to controlled experimental situations and restricted from entering the commercial trade until such tobacco has been accepted in general commercial usage.**
32. We request that all states be treated equally by the Risk Management Agency in reference to the MPCCI regulations and that production and price guarantees adequately reflect the true costs of production. The premium charges should be based on the same standards as all other commodities.
33. We request that tobacco be treated equally by RMA relative to all other fully covered and insurable crops.
34. We strongly urge the NC Legislature to restore full funding to the Tobacco Trust Fund Commission for future years.
35. TGANC encourages USDA in their statistical surveys to release by December 1<sup>st</sup> of each year estimates to the public on tobacco acreage produced in each state for that year.
36. Recognizing the scope and importance of the state's # 1 industry - agriculture, specifically farm land for agricultural production, we request all governmental regulatory agencies maintain an

- understanding and policy supporting the critical need and rights of water usage, particularly those sources traditionally used and developed for agricultural practices.
37. We support efforts to help create awareness about the consequences associated with loss of productive farmland. We applaud the NC Department of Agriculture and the NC General Assembly for its creation and funding of the Farm Land Preservation Trust in the mitigation of the disappearance of our farm land and natural resources.
  38. TGANC continues to be concerned about the potential for sharp escalation in costs of production in growing tobacco and the importance of those entities that purchase leaf tobacco to understand such expenses.
  39. Given the unnecessary costs of multiple barn testing requirements, TGANC advocates that a single, standardize barn test program continues.
  - 40. Understanding that GAP training and certification is beneficial to the industry and that all growers are now required to comply, we support a continued standardized GAP training program.**
  41. We encourage the industry to explore opportunities to achieve increased yields for conventional tobacco seed.
  42. Aging infrastructure is a major concern of all involved in tobacco production. TGANC requests that purchasers of tobacco be aware that multiyear contracts and pricing sufficient to ensure long term profitability are necessary to inspire enough confidence in the grower base to allow for modernizing tobacco specific investments.
  - 43. We call upon the tobacco industry to be aware of the importance of social responsibility.**
  44. Given the diversification of NC agriculture, we encourage the expansion and accessibility for all farmers in rural communities to be in a position to procure natural gas as a viable energy source.
  45. While US tobacco producers pride themselves on the integrity of what is known to be the most carefully produced, high quality tobacco in the world, we acknowledge that possible findings of any noxious materials from naturally occurring plants also present in the fields should be thoroughly investigated and require a cooperative effort to find solutions that resolves such concerns to the satisfaction of our customers.
  - 46. Observing the increasing markets for liquid nicotine we support having U.S. grown tobacco as the source for such materials.**
  - 47. Any transgenic tobacco for commercial production should not be planted in such a way that it creates a risk for cross-contamination with conventional.**

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