

2015 POLICY PRIORITIES

survey results

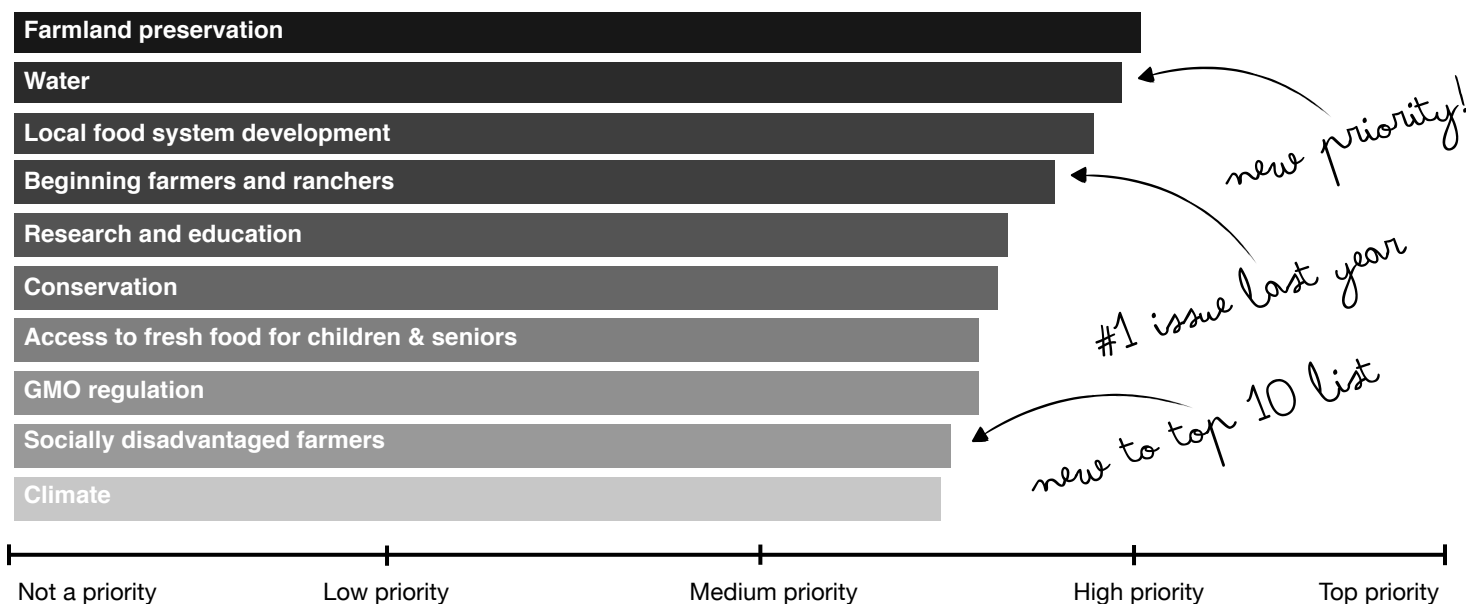


Every year, Tilth Producers of Washington surveys our members about the policy issues that matter to them. To learn more about our policy advocacy work, contact Policy Coordinator Ariana Taylor-Stanley: ariana@tilthproducers.org or 206.660.8958 or visit tilthproducers.org.

PRIORITIES

We asked members to rate 18 policy issues from “not a priority” to “top priority.” *Farmland preservation* topped the list for the first time this year, with 97% of survey respondents listing it as a medium to top priority. This was followed by a new priority issue, *water*. *Local food system development* came in third, followed by *beginning farmers and ranchers*, which had been ranked first for the last two years.

Top 10 Policy Priorities for Tilth Producers of Washington Members, 2015



Other priorities, in order: Rural economic development, Immigration reform, Organic standards, Renewable energy, Fair competition, Food safety regulation, Commodity and crop insurance reform, Organic research and promotion order (aka "check-off program")

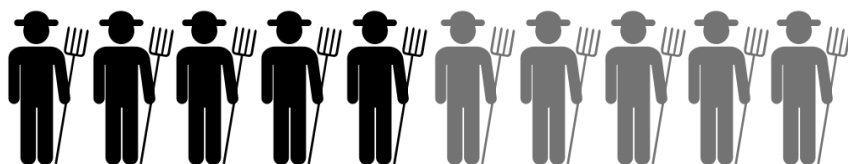
ENGAGING IN ADVOCACY

When asked, “How do you think Tilth Producers should engage in advocacy?” 80% of members surveyed identified *direct advocacy by Tilth*. 73% chose *in-person meetings with legislators*, followed by 53% for *local activities in my community*, 45% for *online action alerts*, and 30% interested in our *policy blog*.



WHO WEIGHED IN?

Participants in this year’s policy priority survey identified as 50% farmers, 20% educators, 15% agriculture professionals, 5% consumers, 5% students, and 5% food service/retail.



“How do you think Tilth Producers should engage in advocacy?”

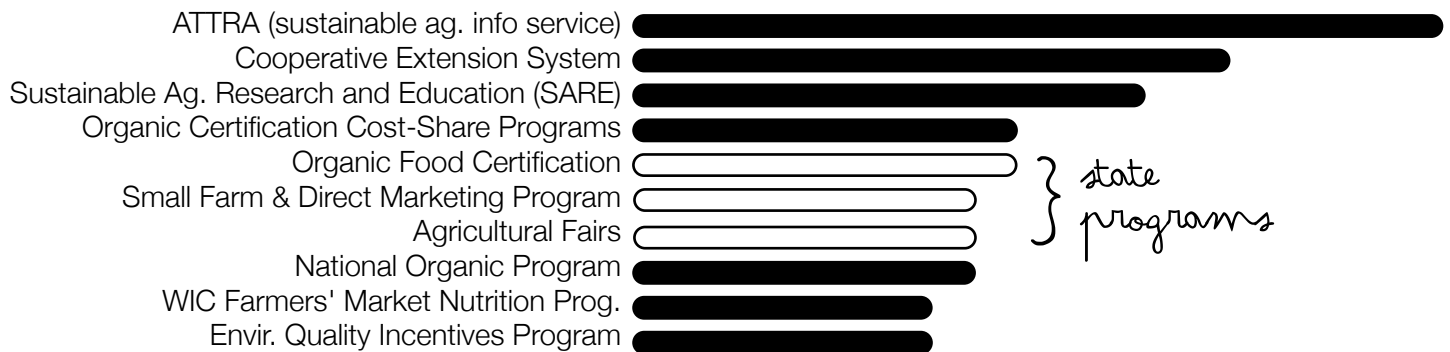
PROGRAMS

Tilth Producers advocates for many policies and programs which support small-scale and organic farmers. We asked members about the federal and state farm programs they use and are interested in using, and about the programs they haven't used but think are valuable.

WE USE...

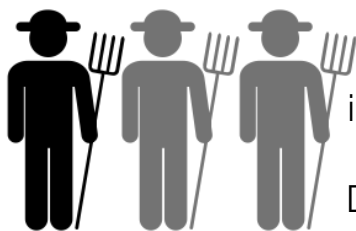
The most popular program, used by half of respondents and two thirds of farmer respondents, was ATTRA (A National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service). This was followed by the Cooperative Extension System, the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program, and then the Organic Certification Cost-Share Program. The most popular state-level programs (ranking fifth, and tied for sixth, respectively) were organic food certification, the Small Farm & Direct Marketing Program, and agricultural fairs.

Top 10 Government Agriculture Programs Used by Tilth Producers of Washington Members, 2015

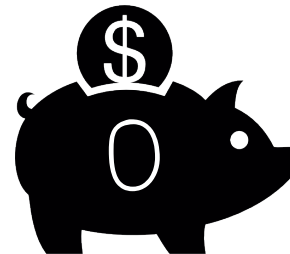


WE WANT....

For each program listed, members were given the option to select, "I am interested in using this program." The program with the most expressed interest was the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Individual Development Accounts Program, which was authorized by Congress in the 2014 Farm Bill but has not yet been funded. 20% of respondents, and one third of farmer respondents, expressed interest in this program.



1 in 3 farmer respondents are interested in using the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Individual Development Accounts Program



\$0 have been allocated by Congress for the program

Runners up: the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Small Farm Program, Small Business Innovation Research Program, and Rural Business Development Grants tied for second place in expressed interest.

WE VALUE...

Members also had the option to select, "I have not used this program, but I think it is valuable." The most valued program was the Conservation Reserve Program, with 35% of respondents selecting it.

#1 Most Valuable:
Conservation Reserve Program

- #2 Most Valuable (tied):**
- Direct Farm Ownership & Operating Loans
 - Microloan Program
 - Crop Insurance Program
 - Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (incl. Grassland & Wetlands Reserve Programs)
 - Farm to School Grant Program

- #3 Most Valuable (tied):**
- Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)
 - WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)
 - WSDA Fruit & Vegetable Inspection
 - WSDA Seed Program