

55. COMMODITY CHECKOFFS

We support:

1. Voluntary checkoffs for market promotion, development and research that are collected only once from individuals, marketing agencies or Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) loans when forfeited and only if the farmer can have his checkoff refunded.
2. Legislated mandatory checkoffs for market promotion, development and research if such checkoffs contain provisions calling for:
 - A. The program to be voted in or out by the farmers affected;
 - B. Control of the program by an independent committee of farmers;
 - C. A full refund of monies upon request to farmers until such time as a refund referendum (not a poll) is approved/disapproved by a majority of farmers voting;
 - D. The monies to be used only for purposes intended;
 - E. The checkoff to apply to all imported products;
 - F. Checkoff-funded research grants for end-user products that have royalty or licensing agreements, where feasible, signed with the research institution.
3. Providing information to farmers which supports the need for increased funding of programs designed to expand domestic and foreign markets for commodities and commodity products.
4. The use of technology to increase voting participation.
5. Working with commodity checkoff groups to emphasize value-added benefits to farmers and to focus on higher net returns for farmers.
6. Efforts to revise rules and regulations governing election of directors of commodity checkoff boards.