



Making Democracy Work

The League of Women Voters of Oxford reaffirms our commitment to diversity and pluralism which means that there are and shall be no barriers to participation in any activity of League on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability.

The Oxford Voter

March, 2014

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Save the Dates

- **Tuesday, April 8**, 6-7:30 p.m. at Lane Library: LWVUS Agriculture Study Consensus Meeting
- **Tuesday, April 29**, 7:00 p.m. at the LCNB Meeting Room: Local Annual Convention



Tuesday, April 8th Consensus Meeting on the LWVUS Study on Agriculture 6:00-7:30 p.m. at Lane Library

In order to compress 31 decisions into one and one half hours, we need to ask members to review carefully the materials provided by the LWVOx Study Committee. These materials include the Committee's Report, the Consensus Questions which the Study Committee used for its study, and the Committee's Recommendations to each of these 31 questions.

Further, to compress the meeting, we will use a "Consent Agenda". This is a list of items that we agree are non-controversial. Items that we want to discuss more fully will be pulled off this list to discuss separately. After these items have been removed from the Consent Agenda the remaining non-controversial items will be voted on as a block.

After the vote on the Consent Agenda we will begin discussing the items we pulled from the Consent Agenda.

There will be a strict time limit for each Pro and each Con including the time for discussion of each issue. After discussing the item the group determines if there is consensus on it.

Sally Southard, Program VP



LWV Agriculture Update Consensus Questions **(Committee Recommendations)** [Questions were written by U.S. League]

	Yes	No	No Consensus
Economic Health of the Agricultural Sector <i>(Not Studied by Committee)</i>			
1. Should government financial support for agriculture be directed to:			
[Note: Original LWV document omits b)]			
a) Subsidized agricultural credit (loans)	0	0	0
c) Disaster assistance	0	0	0
d) Crop insurance	0	0	0
e) Farms that supply local and regional markets	0	0	0
f) Subsidized implementation of best management practices	0	0	0
g) Commodity crop programs, e.g., corn, soybeans, sugar, cotton, wheat	0	0	0
h) Commodity livestock program	0	0	0
i) Commodity dairy program	0	0	0
j) Specialty crops, e.g. fruits, vegetables, nuts, etc.	0	0	0
k) Other production methods, e.g. organic, hydroponic, urban, etc. farms	0	0	0
2. What changes should government make regarding direct payment programs to farm operators?			
a) Eliminate direct payments to farm operators	0	0	0
b) Update rules for direct payments to farm operators to support sustainability	0	0	0
c) Broaden the types of farms that are eligible	0	0	0
d) Broaden the types of crops that are eligible <i>(Not Studied by Committee)</i>	0	0	0
e) Effectively enforce existing rules	0	0	0
3. What changes to current crop insurance programs should government make?			
a) Extend to more types of crops	0	0	0
b) Link to the use of conservation practices <i>(Not Studied by Committee)</i>	0	0	0
c) Limit insurance for cultivation of marginal & environmentally sensitive land	0	0	0
d) Cap amount of premium subsidy to a single farm operator	0	0	0
4. Should government act on any of the following? <i>(Not Studied by Committee)</i>			
a) Revise anti-trust legislation to ensure competitive agricultural markets	0	0	0
b) Enforce anti-trust laws as they relate to agriculture	0	0	0
c) Promote alternative marketing systems (regional hub markets, coops, farm markets)	0	0	0

Animal Management **LWV OX Members: BEGIN HERE**

5. Which of the following approaches to animal management should government achieve?			
a) Transparently collect & disclose data about regulated animal feeding operations or aquaculture operations and about the health of animals in such regulated operations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	0
b) Apply & enforce existing clean air and water regulations to animal management facilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	0
6. Which of the following approaches to animal waste management should government require or bring about?			
a) Treat animal waste with environmentally sound technologies	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	0
b) Prioritize federal funds to mitigate existing environmental challenges	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Research and Development

7. Which of the following approaches to research and development should government fund or accomplish? <i>[see end note]</i>			
a) Basic research	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	0
b) Independent third-party (such as an academic institution) risk assessment of products developed using any new technology	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	0
c) Research to assess the impacts of new technologies on human health and the environment, prior to their widespread adoption	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	0
d) Research that advances continuation of diversified & sustainable agricultural systems	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	0
e) Seed banking, research, and other means that promote and preserve genetic diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	0	0

- f) Transparency in the reporting of research studies related to approval of new products and 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 to promote conservation for all types of farms

Food Safety

8. Which of the following approaches to food safety should government perform or fund?

- a) Clarify and enforce pre-market testing requirements for new foods and food additives developed using any new technology (see end note)
- b) Require developers to monitor all food products developed using any new technology after releasing to the market
- c) Withdraw marketing approval if products are shown to be unsafe
- 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
- 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)
- i) Fund, train & add personnel for assessment & compliance functions of regulatory agencies

Food Labeling

9. How sufficient are the following regarding current food labeling?

- | | Insufficient | Sufficient | Too much | No Consensus |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Nutrition Facts on food labels | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Nutrition Facts on food labels as a means of consumer education | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Common allergen labeling | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Health and ingredient claims that consumers can understand | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

10. Which of the following should government achieve regarding marketing and ingredient claims on food labels?

- | | Yes | No | No Consensus |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Define (and approve for use) health and safety marketing terms (e.g. immunity support, humane, pasture-raised, natural) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Regulate the use of images or other sensory advertising | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Require that ingredient marketing claims accurately represent ingredient list | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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? [See end note]

- | | Not recommended/Voluntary | Mandatory | No Consensus |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Contains ingredients developed using any new technology stating which technologies are involved | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Does not contain ingredients developed using any new technology | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 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 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Note: For the purpose of these questions and some questions below, “developed using any new technology” or “new technologies” 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.



Oxford LWV Agriculture Update Committee Supporting Narrative

GMOs

Background: A GMO is a living organism that possesses a novel combination of genetic material obtained through the use of modern biotechnology. In the United States, 93% of corn and 85% of soybeans are GMO. Europe, on the other hand, severely restricts the planting and sale of GMOs.

Oxford LWV Agriculture Committee members have a consensus on these aspects of GMOs:

- Little is known about the interaction of GMOs with ecosystems, such as possible adverse effects on biological diversity, livestock feed, and competitiveness of various species. Independent research and analysis of these and all aspects of GMOs and related technologies must be undertaken.
- Independent research and analysis needs to address the possibility that the widespread use of GMOs in the United States may pose a risk to food security, through promotion of a less biologically diverse agricultural system, in which a handful of successful companies control the production and distribution of a decreasing variety of seeds.
- Evidence thus far indicates that GMOs may have comparable nutrition content to GMO-free foods, but as a new technology sufficient research has not been undertaken to permit independent scientific conclusions on the possible health risks of consuming a primarily GMO diet.
- Given the lack of independent research and analysis to date concerning the impact of GMOs on the environment and on health, the burden of proof should be placed on proponents of GMOs to demonstrate a lack of adverse environmental and health impacts, rather than on those concerned with GMOs to prove an absence of adverse impacts.
- The European Union requires labeling of products containing GMOs, but that is not the case in the United States, where leading producers of GMO food have thus far successfully fought labeling requirements
- Mandatory labeling of GMO products would give consumers the information necessary to choose whether or not to consume GMOs, just as labels currently list preservatives, artificial flavors, and colors so that consumers may choose whether or not to consume them.
- The United States alone among major countries of the world has not signed international protocols to tightly regulate the use of GMO seeds and to require labeling of GMO products.

Food Safety

Background: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control reports that 50 million Americans get sick each year from eating unsafe food, such as contamination from bacteria like Salmonella and E.Coli. The U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) has responsibility for 80 percent of our food, including most non-meat products, but a dozen other federal agencies, as well as numerous state and local agencies, also have responsibility for assuring the safety of our food. Because of the fragmented federal oversight, the U.S. General Accounting Office classifies food safety as a “high risk” for the United States. The Food Safety Modernization Act of 2011 significantly increased the powers and responsibilities of the FDA.

Oxford LWV Agriculture Committee members have a consensus on these aspects of food safety:

- Regulation of the nation’s food system is a vital role for government. However, the multiplicity of agencies adversely affects the efficiency of the regulatory process. It can result in inconsistent regulations among agencies, as well as overregulation, especially of small farmers.
- Regulations remain especially onerous for small-scale farmers, producers, and processors. Burdensome regulations designed for large producers make it difficult, if not impossible, for small farmers to function.

- The safety of food consumed in the United States faces greater risk because of a rapid increase in imports, including from countries with poor records of food safety standards. A top priority of food regulators must be a more vigorous oversight to assure the safety of imported food.
- Recent legislation and regulations do not address potential risks from increased use of GMOs, pesticides, and antibiotics.

Antibiotics

Background: Antibiotics used to treat human illnesses are widely administered to animals. Administering antibiotics for therapeutic purposes is not controversial. The controversy is that antibiotics are increasingly administered to feed animals to foster weight gain. The European Union has banned the use of antibiotics in livestock for reasons other than medical, such as promoting weight gain. The United States has permitted the use of antibiotics to promote growth. The U.S. Food & Drug Administration put in place a new policy in December 2013 to phase out their use, but the effectiveness of the new policy is not yet known.

Oxford LWV Agriculture Committee members have a consensus on these aspects of antibiotics:

- The recently adopted FDA policy to ban the use of antibiotics in livestock to foster weight gain is a major step forward.
- The effectiveness of the implementation of the new policy—primarily by requiring a veterinarian to prescribe antibiotics—is not yet known.
- The new FDA policy does not address all of the ways that antibiotics administered to livestock can enter the human food chain, such as through water.
- The new FDA policy does not address administering antibiotics to livestock as a prophylactic [that is to prevent illness rather than to treat an already diagnosed illness].



Annual Convention Preview

The Annual Convention on Tuesday, April 29 will begin at 7 p.m. with a Dessert Party—a time for socializing and renewing friendships. At 7:30 p.m. the business meeting will start. We will review the achievements of the year and look to next year with the elections of officers and directors and give directions to the new board of directors.

You will receive the Annual Convention Packet by Saturday, March 29 by email or through the U.S. mail.

I look forward to seeing you at the Annual Convention.

Mary Jo Clark Co-President and Organization VP



8th Annual Women's Read-In

Miami University Libraries and the Miami University Women's Center invites you to the 8th Annual Women's Read-In, which is a part of Women's History month celebrations. We invite you to come read a short story, poem, speech, or other work written by a woman. Our theme this year is "Celebrating Freedom of Expression." We will be focusing especially on Freedom Summer and female civil rights activities, though any reading/performance by women are welcomed.

The event this year will be held on Tuesday March 18th from 11:30am-3:00pm in King Library 320. You can register to read/perform work by your favorite female artist, or just drop by to listen and enjoy refreshments.

Registration and other information can be found here: <http://libguides.lib.miamioh.edu/women>

Arianne Hartsell-Gundy



New Member Profile: Judith Trent

In 1984 Judith Trent went to the University of Cincinnati as an ACE Fellow in Academic Administration. After one year she became VP for Research and Advance Study as well as a professor of Communications. In 2001 Judith left Administration and stayed in the Dept. of Communications as a professor until her retirement in 2013.

When did you join the League?

I recently joined the League.

Why did you join the Oxford League of Women Voters?

What is your current role with the League?

I have given speeches to the League on presidential campaigns. It seemed natural to join. My current role is being a member.

What issues would you like to see the League focusing on?

I would like to see them focus on educating the voters. This is a top priority for me. We need to make sure that voting procedures are not changed in a way that would negatively affect the voters.

What do you find most rewarding about being a League member?

It was most rewarding at the recent planning meeting at Marcum to see people working together for a common cause to benefit all citizens.

What do you think is the biggest issue voters face?

The issue voters face is making certain that other voters' rights are not taken away.

Are you involved in any other community organizations?

Des Fluers Garden Club, Episcopalian Church, OCAC Gala committee and about to join Kiwanis.

What interests do you have outside of the League?

My other interests are writing, travelling and spending time enjoying my dogs.

Every 4 years I travel with a research team to New Hampshire and tour with the presidential candidates. We distribute questionnaires to the people attending asking them what they believe are the most important qualities the presidential candidates should have. The results are then published in the American Behavioral Science Journal.



Linda Simmons, Membership Committee