

Advocacy for Small-Scale, Ecological Farms & the Growth of the Grange

WHEREAS, the Preamble of the Constitution of the National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, Ch. 1.0.4, states: “The soil is the source from whence we derive all that constitutes wealth; without it we would have no agriculture, no manufacturers, no commerce. Of all the material gifts of the Creator, the various productions of the vegetable world are of the first importance. The art of agriculture is the parent and precursor of all arts, and its products, the foundation of all wealth,” and;

WHEREAS, the Declaration of Purposes of the National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, Ch. 2, 2.3.1, states: “For our business interests we desire to bring producer and consumer into the most direct and friendly relations possible, remembering that, ‘individual happiness depends upon general prosperity;’”and

WHEREAS, the Declaration of Purposes of the National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry, Ch. 2, 2.3.2, states: “We are opposed to such spirit and management of any corporation or enterprise which tends to oppress people. We long to see antagonism between capital and labor removed by common consent, and by statesmanship worthy of an enlightened people;” and

WHEREAS, Title 7-A Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, §201-A, Local food and rural economic development, of the Maine Revised Statutes states: “It is the policy of this State to encourage food self-sufficiency for its citizens. The department shall support policies that: ‘Ensure the preservation of the family farm and traditional foodways through small-scale farming and food production’; and, ‘Improve the health and well-being of citizens of this state by reducing hunger and increasing food security through improved access to wholesome, nutritious foods by supporting family farms and encouraging sustainable farming and fishing;’ and, ‘Enhance rural economic development and the environmental and social wealth of rural communities;’” and

WHEREAS, the Grange is long established in place to act as a unified organization to further the growth of local food production if it will do so proactively, and with one voice; and

WHEREAS, active support for ecological, community-based agriculture and small-scale farms encourages the growth of strong and healthy rural communities and economies; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Maine State Grange enact a three pronged strategy of advocacy including, but not limited to, policy, education, and resource support for small, ecological, community-based farms and also for the growth of the Grange.

1. Policy. The Maine State Grange shall work proactively with elected local, state, and federal officials to further the shared interests of small-scale, ecological farms and their communities;
2. Education. The Maine State Grange shall work in concert with Subordinate/Community Granges to educate the general public about ecological farming principles and the relation of soil health to community wealth;
3. Resource Support. The Maine State Grange shall adopt as a goal serving a facilitating role to support Maine farmers seeking information and resources in areas such as, but not limited to: infrastructure support, financing, land searches, leases, grant-writing, labor, capital, husbandry, technical support, business planning, conservation et al that serve as challenges to the growth of ecological farming in Maine.