



Making Norway
Grow!

ENGLISH

NORGES BONDELAG





Making Norway Grow!

The 60 000 members of the Norwegian Farmers' Union (NFU) give you tasty and varied food of high quality, create viable and strong local communities all over Norway, maintain a beautiful country and cultural landscape and secure innovation in production and enterprises in the farm holdings.

The NFU works to improve the conditions for Norwegian farming and to advocate the importance of farming in a modern society. The NFU has no formal ties to any political party. It is the leading organisation for agricultural business and politics, and delivers a wide range of service to members. With its 60 000 members, 600 local branches, 18 county departments, close political contacts and highly qualified employees, the NFU is a strong and respected organisation.

The Norwegian Farmers' Union has a wide engagement:

Frameworks and farming policies

Our objectives

- To secure the overall framework for farm based activities for our members.
- To ensure sufficient income in farming to create and maintain attractive jobs and business development in agriculture.
- To secure Norwegian interests in international agreements, and thus maintaining the freedom to form a sound domestic agricultural policy.
- To ensure local ownership and local control of resources.

- To develop an active policy for maintaining a decentralised population and employment opportunities in rural areas.

International agreements and affairs

Our objectives

- To obtain a WTO-agreement (World Trade Organisation) that gives the right to national food production and ensures a viable agriculture in all areas of the country.
- To ensure that Norway does not become a member of the European Union
- To secure Norwegian interests in international forums and affairs

New farm enterprises

Our objectives

- To help develop new income sources for farmers
- To promote and to offer new competence building programmes and secure an economic framework to support development of new industries based on local and farm resources
- To help create positive attitudes to innovation in the sector

Taxation

Our objectives

- To ensure income tax systems and levies as a central element in the economic framework for agriculture
- To work for a taxation system that gives farmers the same rights as other groups to social security, health care, pension rights, etc.

Land ownership and resource management

Our objectives

- To secure the land owners the right to use their farm based natural and cultural resources in business development
- To ensure farmers formal and real participation in local management of land and resources
- To conserve arable land through formal and legal frameworks and policies

Quality production

Our objectives

- To promote new and varied products of high quality in order to give the consumers excellent culinary experiences, and in accordance with consumer demands and wishes
- To work for a small scale production as a means to secure an environmentally sound agriculture and animal welfare
- To develop an agricultural sector with high emphasis on Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

Food supply and food market

Our objectives

- To meet domestic demand for all foodstuffs for which we have natural growing conditions in Norway
- To maintain stable prices and a secure market turnover through production- and market regulations

Communication and information

Our objectives

- To have a substantial influence on public opinion, politicians and decision makers through media and other channels
- To raise agricultural issues in the public debate and to be an avid representative on behalf of our members
- To build a permanent positive attitude towards farming and agriculture through activities and campaigns aimed at the general public

Individual advantages for members

- **Insurance.** An agreement with one of Norway's major insurance companies – Gjensidige – gives substantial discounts in insurance coverage for both life insurance and non-life insurance (machinery, cars, buildings, livestock).
- **Discount card.** Agrol is a small company owned 50% by the NFU, and set up to provide discount prices on gasoline, diesel, electric power, telephone services, cars, accessories, etc
- **Farmers weekly** – Bondebladet – included in membership fee
- **Assistance** in matters such as economics, accountancy, taxation, legal matters, regulations, agricultural policies, land management
- Separate and special **discounts for members under 35 years**

The member organisation

The NFU is the main farmers' union in Norway. The objective is to unite all who are, or feel attached to agriculture and work for common

interests. The NFU was established in 1896 and has 60 000 members, of which approximately 32 000 are producers/farm owners. The remaining are family members and others who support the union. There are approximately 25 per cent female members.

The members are organised in 600 local branches at municipal level, which are affiliated with 18 county departments, but all are direct members of the NFU. The organisations income is largely based on membership fees, which are calculated on the basis of elements related to the size of cultivated area and production. The membership fee is tax deductible.

Local branches of the NFU function as local interest groups and constitute the main meeting ground for colleagues in the local farming sector. It's a responsibility to engage and influence local authorities, especially in matters concerning land management and business development. The local annual meeting is open to all members and gives each member the right and possibility to influence the policies and workings of the national organisation, through raising local issues, submitting petitions and election of local leaders and delegates to county meetings.

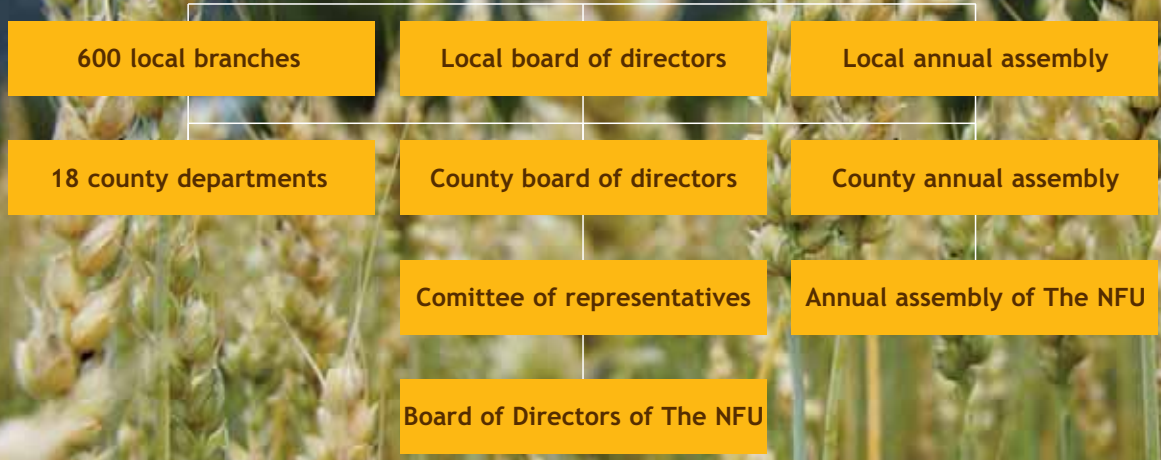
The county departments (18) have the responsibility to engage and influence authorities at county level. This is partly carried out through formal representation in committees concerning regional business development. The county departments are also active toward politicians, both MP's and representatives for county based governments and party organisations. The county's job is, in addition, to follow up and assist the local branches. Each

county department holds an annual assembly, which elects county leaders and delegates to the annual national assembly of the NFU.

The Norwegian Farmers' Union has governing bodies consisting of the annual national assembly, a board of representatives and the board of directors, consisting of 12 members. The annual national assembly elects the president, 1st and 2nd deputy president and 7 other board members. The leaders of "Rural Women" and "Rural Youth" are permanent members of the board. The board of representatives includes in addition to the board of directors, all the county leaders, as well as representatives from the cooperatives for milk producers, meat, poultry, horticulture, breeding, finance, etc.

The NFU's work is aimed at the national authorities, such as the ministries, directorates, the Parliament, and other decision makers. One of the main functions is the annual negotiation with the Government concerning subsidies, prices etc, which usually ends up with the Agricultural Agreement. The NFU has a right to be heard and be present at several hearings and in many political processes. There is a tight cooperation with the agricultural co-ops. The union plays an active role in the ongoing debate about all agricultural issues and many related questions, and also tries to be proactive in order to focus on crucial issues for Norwegian agriculture.

60.000 members



gårdsbutikk ↑

farm man-Lør
shop 10-20

GEITOST
GOATCHEESE

ZIEGENKÄSE
DIREKT VOM HOF



Service for members

The NFU has approximately 60 employees at the central office in Oslo, and the same number total in the county departments.

The county department offices provide staff and help for the board of directors and other bodies at county level. They also offer some service to the local branches, and are important liaisons between the central level and the local unit.

The central office is organised with several departments:

The Department of Organisation plays an important role in maintaining a close contact vertically in the organisation. Production of written material, planning, preparing and coordinating the work in the local and county branches are important tasks. Annual meetings, conferences and seminars are among the department's responsibilities. Whenever the organisation decides to organise demonstrations or other public actions, it's also this department's job to prepare and organise such events. In addition the department works with overall principal documents, annual activity planning and reports. Member registry and membership fees, member insurance, etc are vital functions in the organisation. Other responsibilities are farmer's education and adult learning and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS)

The Department of Information is responsible for communication with the media, the general public and the political system. The department coordinates information and campaigns. Media surveillance

is important to be able to meet critical opinion, and to ensure a necessary base for proactive communication. The Internet is a channel of growing importance, both at the central level and for the county level. However, written material such as brochures and flyers still plays an important role. The department also develops schemes and campaigns to help build a long-term positive attitude toward farming in the public sector. Some examples of campaigns are Open Farm days, inviting school children to farms, and providing schools with information about basic processes and life on the farm.

The Department of Agricultural Policy's main responsibilities are to influence Norwegian agricultural policy in the same direction as the organisations policy. This covers a wide range of issues and topics. The annual negotiation with the Government concerning the Agricultural Agreement is important in forming the income base for active farmers. Other crucial issues are international agreements such as the WTO, and EEA (European Economic Area). Land and resource management is also of vital interest for the members. Recreation, farm tourism, fresh water fisheries, farm visits are new areas for business development and are now much in focus within the departments work.

The Department of Accountancy and Legal Services develops and offers service and computer programs for farmers and local accountancy firms and advisors. With this as a competence basis, the organisation is regarded as one of the most competent in matters of farm taxation and other related

questions. An agreement with 50 local law firms gives members legal help at reasonable prices.

The Department of Administration is responsible for budgets and finance, for personnel recruitment and development, technical support and real estate development.

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ISBN 13: 978-82-7712-042-3

ISBN 10: 82-7712-042-7