

Forward Or Back: The Choice For Rural America

In Iowa, Mitt Romney told a series of falsehoods about the President's plan for rural America. And unsurprisingly, he failed to detail specific plans of his own. The truth is that independent economists agree that Romney's plans would do nothing to create jobs and could slow our recovery. In fact, Romney would have to raise taxes on middle class families and small business owners to pay for his massive tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans. Here are the facts about President Obama and Mitt Romney's plans for rural America:

	ROMNEY	OBAMA
1. TAXES	<p>Romney's Plan Could Raise Middle-Class Taxes: Romney has proposed a \$5 trillion tax plan; he says he will close tax deductions and loopholes to pay for it but won't say which ones. His tax cuts for the rich are so large that paying for his plan would require raising taxes on middle-class families with children by \$2,000, according to the independent Tax Policy Center.</p> <p>Ending the Estate Tax Helps Wealthy Individuals, not Farmers: Under President Obama's plan to bring estate taxes back to where they were when President Bush left office, fewer than three out of every 1,000 estates would pay any estate taxes at all – including just 60 small farms and businesses nationwide next year. Romney's plan to repeal the estate tax would cost more than \$150 billion over the next decade to help the wealthiest families in America.</p>	<p>Obama's Middle-Class Tax Cuts: President Obama has cut taxes for a typical family by \$3,600 over the past four years, and he has called on Congress to extend the middle-class income tax cuts to prevent a tax increase on families making less than \$250,000 a year – 98 percent of American families.</p> <p>Obama's Small Business and Farms Tax Cuts: President Obama has cut taxes for small businesses 18 times and has called on Congress to prevent income tax increases on 97 percent of small businesses and farms. His jobs plan – which Mitt Romney opposes -- would allow farms and other small businesses to immediately write-off 100 percent of the cost of new investments – including in new farm buildings and equipment.</p>
2. TRADE	<p>Romney Has Never Stood Up For American Workers In The Global Marketplace: When President Obama imposed stiff tariffs on Chinese tires to save over 1,000 American jobs and stand up for workers Romney called it "bad for the nation and our workers". Romney doesn't look out for American workers when he thinks of international trade.</p> <p>Romney's Irresponsible Statements About Our Foreign Trade Partners Could Hurt Farm Exports: Romney's policies could start a trade war with China, which even his fellow conservatives have called "wrongheaded," "a remarkably bad idea," and "wise to avoid." Damaging trade would hurt farmers – agriculture is responsible for more than 10 percent of our exports.</p>	<p>Helped Farm Exports Reach All-Time Highs: Last year, American exports of food and other agriculture products reached a record high of \$137 billion, supporting over 1.1 million jobs.</p> <p>President Obama Signed Three New Trade Deals: He concluded trade deals with South Korea, Panama and Colombia, which are projected to boost U.S. agricultural exports by \$2.3 billion per year. Farmers are already benefitting: during negotiations with South Korea, US beef exports to the country more than doubled. And the President is now negotiating the Trans Pacific Partnership to open new markets for America's farmers and ranchers.</p> <p>Standing Up for American Farmers: The Administration also continues to fight for America's farmers and ranchers to open export markets where they face unwarranted barriers – and has taken action to do so in countries like China and India. He has brought trade cases against China at more than twice the rate of the Bush administration, and created a new trade enforcement unit to challenge unfair trading practices by other countries.</p>
3. REGULATIONS	<p>Repeats Debunked Myths to Justify Regulatory Rollback: Romney has laid out policies dependent on scare tactics instead of fact – dredging up myths about farm dust, airplane surveillance, child labor and water regulations that have been repeatedly debunked.</p> <p>Rolling Back Protections For Our Kids, Clean Water And Air: Under the guise of protecting rural Americans from these mythical intrusions, Romney would roll back environmental safeguards that protect the health of our children and keep our air and water clean.</p> <p>Failing To Protect Our Public Lands: By choosing big oil corporations over farmers and families, Romney has pledged to open up public lands for drilling and speed past the safeguards needed to protect our water resources.</p>	<p>Fewer, More Thoughtful Regulations: President Obama approved fewer regulations in the first three years of his presidency than George Bush did in the first three years of his. A sweeping review of rules on the books has resulted in agencies identifying over 580 reforms, a small fraction of which – already finalized or formally proposed to the public – will save more than \$10 billion over the next five years.</p> <p>Great Benefits for the Public: When it has acted, the Obama Administration's rules have created more than \$91 billion in net benefits, over 25 times the corresponding figure in the first three years of the Bush administration. They will save tens of thousands of lives and prevent hundreds of thousands of cases of disease.</p> <p>Working with Farmers: The Obama administration has worked with farmers to identify and reduce regulatory burdens. For example, in return for voluntarily making habitat improvements on their lands, landowners can reduce any burden of further conservation action they might need to take. This helps reduce the burden on landowners while ensuring the protection of surrounding lands and species.</p>

<p>4. ENERGY</p>	<p>Raises Taxes On Wind Energy: Romney would roll back investments in the clean energy economy, including allowing the wind production tax credit to expire, risking 37,000 jobs across the country.</p> <p>Puts Oil Corporations First: Oil corporations helped Mitt Romney write his energy plan, so it's no wonder his policies put their interests first. From increased drilling on public lands to weakening the safeguards needed to protect our water supplies, Romney has sided with the same corporations he plans to keep giving \$4 billion in tax breaks every year.</p> <p>Opposes Efforts To Save Rural Families Money At The Gas Pump: Romney opposes fuel economy standards that will save consumers \$8,000 a year at the pump. He would also undo President Obama's efforts to stop Wall Street speculators from manipulating the price of gas.</p>	<p>Launched an All-of-the-Above Energy Strategy: President Obama charted a course to cut net oil imports in by 2020 by responsibly developing all of our natural resources, like wind, solar, biofuels, natural gas, oil and clean coal.</p> <p>Promotes Clean Energy: President Obama has proposed the extension of the wind production tax credit as part of his Congressional To-Do list, and since he took office, electricity from wind and solar has already more than doubled.</p> <p>Biofuels: President Obama is working to expand the use of ethanol and other biofuels, including increasing the amount of ethanol blended in gasoline, and implementing the renewable fuel standard that will displace over 300 million barrels of oil by 2022.</p>
<p>AND ONE HE MISSED: AGRICULTURE</p>	<p>No Stand On The Farm Bill: Romney's agriculture white paper barely mentions the farm bill, other than to say that it should be timely. But "Romney doesn't say which version of the farm bill he supports. Meanwhile, Romney and Ryan have failed to exercise leadership in the House, where the Farm Bill is stalled. And, the Romney-Ryan budget would require farmers to pay more for crop insurance. Without a Farm Bill, farmers affected by this historic drought will not get the critical disaster relief that they need.</p>	<p>A Stronger Safety Net: President Obama is urging Congress to pass a five-year farm and jobs bill that strengthens the farm safety net, including natural disaster relief and a strong crop insurance program. And his plan invests in rural economies by increasing access to credit for rural small businesses, investing in rural broadband, water and sewer infrastructure, and expanding access to health care.</p>