



The Food and Farm Act

Congressman Earl Blumenauer ■ Third District of Oregon ■ www.blumenauer.house.gov

The Problem:

The Farm Bill is the most important yet underappreciated piece of federal legislation Congress regularly considers. Hopelessly complex and expensive, it sets national priorities for federal investment in our food and farm system, giving too much to the wrong people to grow the wrong food in the wrong places. At the same time, it maintains a pattern of cutting benefits for the most vulnerable people and doesn't do enough to support fruits and vegetables or the majority of small and mid-sized farmers and ranchers. In short, the bill misdirects federal resources while undermining human health, nutrition, carbon reduction, economic development, land conservation, and animal welfare. Congress can do better with the next Farm Bill by crafting a bill that redirects spending, promotes healthy food, and provides innovative solutions for environmental challenges.

The Solution: The Food and Farm Act

The Food and Farm Act is a comprehensive, alternative Farm Bill that advances Congressman Blumenauer's four principles of agricultural reform: (1) focusing resources on those who need it most; (2) fostering innovation; (3) encouraging investments in people and the planet; and (4) ensuring access to healthy foods.

The Food and Farm Act will:

- Rein in bloated and loophole-ridden commodity programs by:
 - Capping commodity subsidies for recipients and putting limits on overall spending on the largest commodity programs.
- Cut wasteful crop insurance and make it work better for farmers who need it by:
 - Strengthening the conservation compliance requirements for recipients of federal subsidies and leveling the playing field for farms that grow multiple crops.
- Invest in the future of American farmers by:
 - Supporting aging farmers in passing the torch to the next generation through increased support at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); and
 - Expanding existing programs, and creating new incentives and tools to help young farmers and ranchers gain access to land, equipment, and market opportunities.
- Strengthen nutrition programs and feed more Americans by:
 - Expanding federal resources for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients to purchase healthy fruits and vegetables in urban and rural retailers; and
 - Making it easier for school lunch programs to serve fresh, local fruits and vegetables in more states.



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- Reduce food waste and ensure that more resources go to the needy by:
 - Creating a Food Waste Title to reduce food waste in the United States, and focusing USDA on tackling this challenge across federal agencies and at schools.
- Reforming conservation programs to be more cost-effective and outcome-driven by:
 - Setting performance-based standards for conservation programs and prioritizing projects that address antibiotic use, pollinator restoration, and greenhouse gas emissions reductions, while preventing Confined Animal Feeding Operations from receiving these funds; and
 - Reforming programs to perform on a landscape level for maximum environmental benefit.
- Enhancing innovative research and development by:
 - Increasing funding for the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program.
- Investing in local and regional food systems by:
 - Expanding accessibility, opportunities, and funding for programs that connect eaters, especially those in underserved areas, with fresh food from local farmers and ranchers;
 - Focusing federal resources on infrastructure for local and regional food systems; and
 - Expanding funding for federal investment in fruits and vegetables instead of a few commodity crops.

The Farm Bill is typically authorized for five years, and it's up to Congress to propose, debate, and enact each bill. The current Farm Bill, a 357-page piece of legislation which was projected to cost almost half a trillion dollars over five years, was signed into law in 2014. The next Farm Bill is due for reauthorization by fall of 2018.