



The Food and Farm Act Highlights

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Title I: Commodities and Crop Insurance

Title I cuts, caps, and clarifies the farm subsidy programs available in the commodity, conservation, and crop insurance titles of the Farm Bill. It expands coverage for non-commodity farms and ensures that farmers who receive subsidies reduce their environmental impact.

- **Eliminates excessive commodity programs:** The bill eliminates the Agriculture Risk Coverage Program and the Price Loss Coverage Program, two expensive commodity programs created by the 2014 Farm Bill to replace direct payments;
- **Limits total subsidies:** Limits the aggregate payment a farmer or agribusiness can receive from the commodity, conservation, and crop insurance programs to \$125,000 per year;
- **Caps payments for farmers with high incomes:** Reduces the current Farm Bill's Adjusted Gross Income cap on payments from commodity and conservation programs from \$900,000 to \$500,000 and ensures that this limitation also covers crop insurance premium subsidies;
- **No crop insurance loophole for peanut growers:** Closes the loophole that gives peanut farmers a separate payment limit on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- **Extends crop insurance to farmers who reduce erosion:** Allows farmers who plant erosion-reducing cover crops to qualify for crop insurance premium subsidies, and prohibits farmers from receiving subsidies if they plant on unsuitable land.
- **Makes crop insurance more accessible to diversified farms and nurseries:** Expands and strengthens the Whole Farm Revenue Option, a crop insurance option created by the 2014 Farm Bill to insure entire farms instead of individual crops; and

Title II: Conservation

Title II reforms existing conservation programs to focus on performance by distributing resources based on how effectively a project achieves conservation goals and minimizing the environmental impact of agriculture practices.

- **All farmers receiving farm subsidies must comply with conservation requirements:** Requires all producers who receive farm subsidies to implement conservation requirements and sets goals for conservation plans such as improving water quality, reducing soil erosion, and establishing vegetation buffers between cropland and waterways;
- **Prioritizes Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) spending on projects that demonstrably improve the quality of the environment:** Prioritizes projects that focus on practices such as cover cropping, integrated pest management, and pollinator habitat;
- **Eases access to EQIP for organic producers:** Opens funds to farmers who comply with federal organic regulations and those who are transitioning to organic;
- **No EQIP for CAFOs and rewarding pasture-based systems:** No payments to owners of CAFOs and creates a new set-aside for livestock producers who use pasture-based systems;
- **Ensures that more Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) funding goes towards sustainable farming practices:** Requires more CSP funding for source water protection, pest management, and soil conservation and creates new set-asides for rotational grazing, organic transition, and other conservation activities;
- **Establishes clear goals for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program:** Sets program environmental goals and objectives, encourages landscape-level projects, and requires recipients to conduct natural resource and watershed assessments;

- **New loan program for conservation-based structural improvements:** Authorizes a conservation loan program for farmers and ranchers to install conservation structures, building waste management systems, and improve permanent pasture;
- **USDA must report on greenhouse gas emissions from CAFOs and soil tillage:** Requires USDA to track and report on greenhouse gas emissions from agriculture; and
- **Doubles funding for conservation programs:** Key conservation programs authorized in the 2014 Farm Bill receive twice the funding compared to current levels.

Title III: Food Assistance

Title III modifies the Food for Peace Act's existing commodity requirements and streamlines funding for the program's administrative costs, offering USAID and its implementing partners greater flexibility to maximize the scope and efficacy of food assistance programming.

- **Allows more flexibility in determining what food aid works best for each situation:** Provides USAID's implementing partners the ability to use either U.S. commodities or local and regional procurement as they see fit, while eliminating the 15% monetization requirement for non-emergency food assistance.

Title IV: Nutrition

Title IV expands access to healthy food in schools and underserved areas and at farmers markets through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and other initiatives.

- **Increase the minimum SNAP benefit:** Increases the minimum benefit from \$16 to \$25 to close the meal gap (text of Rep. Alma Adams' H.R. 1276);
- **More money for local food systems projects that feed food deserts:** Expands the Healthy Food Financing Initiative to fund projects that enhance local or regional food supply networks and serve urban and rural food deserts;
- **Strengthens the Food and Agriculture Service Learning Program:** Increases opportunities for children to learn about growing, cooking, and eating healthy food (text of Rep. Chellie Pingree's H.R. 3941);
- **Increases fruit and veggie consumption in schools:** Makes the Pilot Project for Procurement of Unprocessed Fruits and Vegetables for school lunch programs permanent, expands its application to additional states, and increases funding for the program;
- **Supports farmers markets in accepting SNAP:** Ensures that Farmers Market SNAP Support grants remain available so markets can accept SNAP and SNAP match programs;
- **Encourages spending on healthy food in grocery stores:** Increases funding for the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentives program and expands its ability to fund SNAP match projects in rural and urban grocery stores; and
- **Boosts access to healthy food:** Creates a program that supports veggie prescription projects in low-income areas (text of Rep. Chellie Pingree's H.R. 3941).

Title V: Future of American Farmers

Title V provides support for beginning farmers and ranchers to enter and stay in the agriculture sector. It also assists those in the business who are ready to retire by helping them transition out of farming while keeping the industry vibrant.

- **More money for training and support:** Provides increased and permanent funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program and Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Program;
- **More grant opportunities:** Increases opportunities for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers to access federal grants for conservation and local food systems;
- **More USDA staff support:** Creates a USDA liaison within each state to support beginning farmers and ranchers, and regional liaisons to help retiring farmers and ranchers with succession planning;
- **New Land Tenure Commission:** Establishes a Land Tenure Commission to advise USDA on land access, farm business transition, and land tenure issues;
- **New income tax credits to encourage beginning farmer and rancher purchase of land and equipment:** Establishes an income tax credit for those who sell land and productive business assets like used equipment or livestock to beginning, socially disadvantaged, or veteran farmers and ranchers, and a separate income tax credit for beginning, socially disadvantaged, and veteran farmers and ranchers who purchase this type of property; and
- **Opens Farm Service Loan funding to agricultural cooperatives:** Ensures that agricultural cooperatives, a business form commonly used by beginning farmers and ranchers, can access Farm Service Facility Loan funding.

Title VI: Food Waste

Title VI establishes the first Food Waste Title of the Farm Bill, which focuses the federal government on food waste reduction and directs USDA to develop methods for measuring, aggregating, and disseminating food waste information to the public.

- **Makes findings about the considerable economic, resource-based, and environmental costs of food waste:** Establishes a Sense of Congress that the federal government should work to reduce food waste across the United States;
- **Establishes an Office of Food Waste within USDA:** Authorizes a federal office to coordinate federal programs to measure, reduce, and raise awareness about food waste;
- **Help for the U.S. to meet its food waste reduction goals:** Establishes a task force to advise and support federal agencies in fulfilling U.S. food loss and waste reduction goals; and
- **Standardizes food waste measurement and reporting methods:** Directs USDA to create a standardized methodology for measuring, aggregating, and publishing food waste data.

Title VII: Research, Extension, and Related Matters

Title VII invests in research and education programs that improve sustainable agriculture practices, while also supporting research to help farmers and ranchers succeed in a changing climate.

- **Invests in the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program:** Increases program mandatory funding and extends resources to Sustainable Agriculture Centers; and
- **More money and more climate awareness for key research programs:** Increases funding for the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative and Specialty Crop Research Initiative programs and places greater emphasis on climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Title VIII: Animal Welfare

Title VIII establishes the first Animal Welfare Title in the Farm Bill, incorporating reforms to ensure that the treatment of animals is a central part of the country's food and agriculture policy.

- **Finalizes USDA's rule for Organic Livestock and Poultry Practices:** Requires USDA to finalize its rule ensuring animal welfare in organic livestock and poultry operations;
- **Prevents USDA from skirting animal welfare standards at federal agricultural research centers:** Ensures that farm animals used in agricultural research at federal research facilities are included in the definition of "animal" under the Animal Welfare Act;
- **Increases research about and access to animal welfare certifications:** Emphasizes animal welfare certifications in research and extension programs, and creates a cost-share program to assist livestock and poultry producers and handlers in obtaining certifications;
- **Reinstates online posting of Animal Welfare Act and Horse Protection Act enforcement records:** Requires USDA to keep and make publicly available information about entities that violate the Animal Welfare Act or the Horse Protection Act; and
- **Bans the trade of cat and dog meat:** Makes it illegal to slaughter a dog or cat for meat and bans trading and transporting that meat for human consumption (text of Rep. Alcee Hastings' H.R. 1406).

Title IX: Regional Food Systems

Title IX invests in existing programs and creates new ones to support vibrant local and regional food systems, increases transparency within USDA's existing programs, and streamlines grant program application procedures to make them more accessible.

- **Makes findings about the significant economic, nutritional, and environmental benefits of local and regional food systems:** Establishes a Sense of Congress that by supporting the growth and advancement of local and regional food systems, the U.S. invests in an environmentally and economically resilient food and agriculture system;
- **Expands federal investment in projects that develop and improve local and regional food systems:** Expands a program that connects demand for local food in urban areas with supply from local farmers and maximizes use of Local and Regional Food Project funding under Rural Development's Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program;
- **Increases funding for specialty crops:** Expands funding for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, which supports states that grow and market a diverse array of crops;
- **Invests in local and regional food system infrastructure:** Creates a funding opportunity for local and regional food system infrastructure assessments and planning activities;
- **Boost funding for meat and poultry processing infrastructure:** Provides USDA authority to use Rural Development grants and loans for meat and poultry processing infrastructure (text of Rep. Chellie Pingree's H.R. 3941);
- **Increases transparency and accessibility for USDA food system grant programs:** Requires USDA to publish an online database about funded local and regional food system projects and directs the agency to streamline local and regional food program application procedures to make them more accessible to potential applicants; and
- **Finalizes regulations to protect small farmers from retaliation:** Requires USDA to crack down on unfair and anti-competitive business practices from big meat and poultry processors by finalizing the Farmer Fair Practice rule, also known as the GIPSA rule.