

HOUSE - SENATE CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

AGRICULTURAL ACT OF 2014

HIGHLIGHTS:

➔ Saves taxpayers \$23 billion in mandatory federal spending.

➔ Includes the most significant reduction to farm policy spending in history by improving agricultural programs.

➔ Makes the first reforms to SNAP (food stamps program) since the welfare reforms of 1996 while maintaining critical food assistance to families in need.

➔ Repeals or consolidates nearly 100 programs administered by USDA, including Direct Payments to farmers.

➔ Reduces regulatory barriers for job creators while making critical investments in land stewardship, rural electric, water, and other infrastructure needs that grow job capacity.

➔ Provides certainty to America's farmers, ranchers, and consumers by adopting a five-year farm bill.

REFORMS FARM POLICY

- Repeals Direct Payments and limits producers to risk management tools that offer protection when they suffer significant losses.
- Limits on payments are reduced, eligibility rules are tightened, and means tests are streamlined to make farm programs more accountable.
- Strengthens crop insurance, a successful public/private partnership that ensures farmers invest in their own risk management.
- Provides historic reforms to dairy policy by repealing outdated and ineffective dairy programs. Offers producers a new, voluntary, margin protection program without imposing government-mandated supply controls.
- Reauthorizes and strengthens livestock disaster assistance.
- Supports small businesses and beginning farmers and ranchers with training and access to capital.

REFORMS FOOD STAMPS

- Closes the "heat-and-eat" loophole that artificially increases benefit levels when states provide nominal LIHEAP assistance.
- Establishes a 10-state pilot to empower states to engage able-bodied adults in mandatory work programs.
- Prohibits USDA from engaging in SNAP recruitment activities, and advertising SNAP on TV, radio, billboards & through foreign governments.
- Ensures illegal immigrants, lottery winners, traditional college students, and the deceased do not receive benefits.
- Ensures SNAP recipients are not receiving benefits in multiple states.
- Prevents abuses such as water dumping to exchange bottles for cash.
- Demands outcomes from existing employment and training programs.
- Prohibits states from manipulating SNAP benefit levels by eliminating medical marijuana as an allowable medical expense.
- Allows states to pursue retailer fraud through a pilot investigation program and crack down on trafficking through data mining, terminal ID, and other measures.
- Increases assistance for food banks.

ADDITIONAL REFORMS & REGULATORY RELIEF

- Consolidates 23 duplicative and overlapping conservation programs into 13.
- Provides one year of full funding for the Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program, which provides funding for vital services in communities containing federal lands.
- Provides certainty to forest products industry by clarifying that forest roads should not be treated as a point source under the Clean Water Act.
- Creates a permanent subcommittee within the EPA Science Advisory Board to conduct peer review of EPA actions that would negatively impact agriculture.
- Eliminates duplicative reporting requirements for seed importers; requires improved economic analysis of FDA regulations.
- Fully funds specialty crop industry priorities such as Specialty Crop Block Grants.