



HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

CRAFTING THE 2023 FARM BILL

The Farm Bill is a vital pillar to ensuring America continues providing our country and the world with the safest, most abundant, and affordable food, fiber, and energy supply.

Simply put, food security is national security.

The pandemic, war in Europe, record inflation, and unrelenting natural disasters like severe flooding and drought has put an incredible strain on the agriculture value chain and underscores the importance of a reliable domestic food supply.

Now, more than ever, we need a farm bill that addresses the concerns facing production agriculture. As production and input costs continue to soar, consumers feel the impact in their wallets.

We need a bill that acknowledges the sweat equity of our farmers and ranchers who are feeding more people with fewer resources than ever before.

A Farm Bill that reflects our nation's conscious decisions to keep agriculture and our forests and grasslands sustainable for generations to come.

One that demonstrates the heart and compassion of the American people, ensures Americans in need can access nutritious foods, and puts them on the path to financial independence.

We need a Farm Bill that restores transparency and accountability to the American taxpayers who foot the bill for these vital programs.

We're crafting a farm bill that:

Strengthens the farm safety net. Provides stability for America's farmers and ranchers through improvements to the farm safety net and ensures we have defensible programs that meet the needs of all producers.

Streamlines government. Eliminates redundancy and rolls back heavy-handed federal regulations that stifle our nation's farmers, ranchers, foresters and consumers.

Ensures fiscal responsibility. Improves existing programs to maximize efficiency, reduce waste, and maintain fiscally responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars

Creates opportunities, restores accountability, and promotes health. Protects our neighbors in need of nutrition aid while addressing program deficiencies.

Revitalizes rural America. Better targets resources to maintain our commitment to rural development while addressing threats to plant and animal health.

Conserves our farms & forests. Keeps our land and resources sustainable for our children and grandchildren by encouraging voluntary, incentive-based conservation practices that protect our farms and forests alike.



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE
CHAIRMAN GT THOMPSON

2023 AUGUST RECESS PACKET

Since January, House Republicans have charted a new course in Congress through returning to regular order, restoring fiscal responsibility, and achieving historic victories for the American people.

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COMMITTEE ACTIVITY

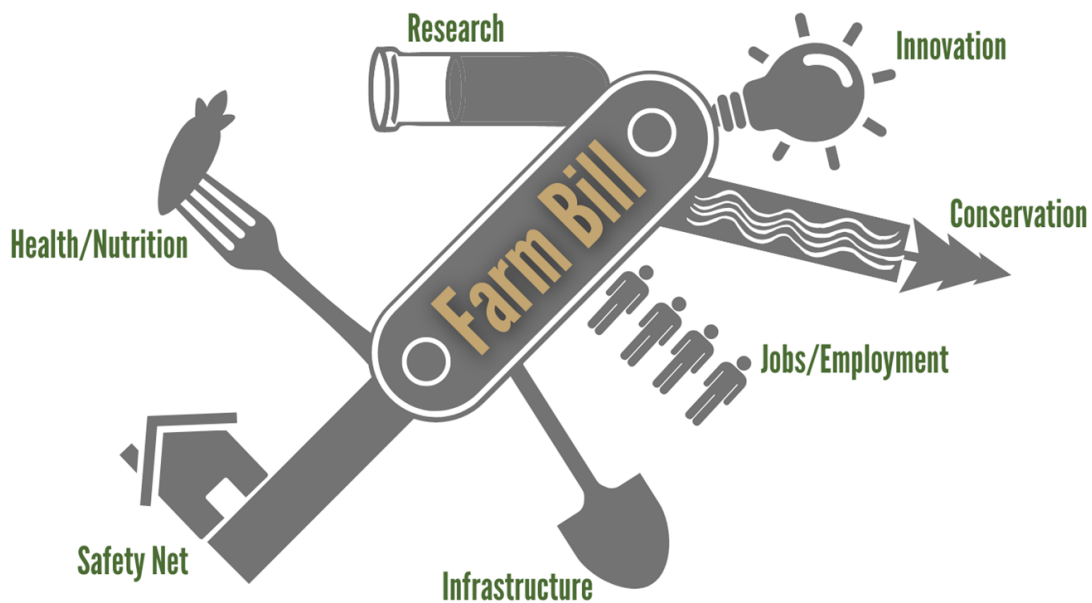
Since January, the House Committee in Agriculture has hosted 19 hearing, which included oversight and implementation of the 2018 Farm Bill, testimony from both the Secretary of Agriculture and Administrator of EPA, broadband, the wildfire crises, and how to best serve rural America.

In total, since becoming Ranking Member in 2019, Chairman Thompson has met with more than 1,500 stakeholder groups, held weekly Member briefings, spent thousands of hours listening to the concerns of America's agriculture industry, traveled to nearly 40 states, and hosted eight official Farm Bill listening sessions.



2023 FARM BILL

Since the 1930s, Congress has enacted 18 Farm Bills, typically reauthorized every five years. From the farm safety net, critical infrastructure, conservation of forests and lands, to technological innovation, research, rural development, health and nutrition, and millions of jobs that depend on a strong agricultural economy, **the Farm Bill has a tremendous impact on the day to day lives of every American.**

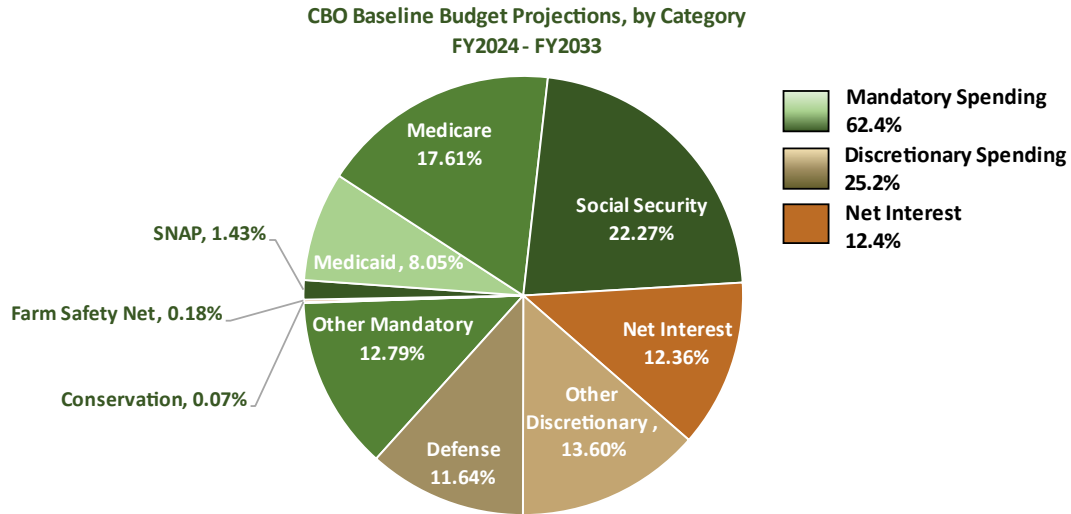


This year, Republicans have an opportunity to produce a highly effective Farm Bill to revitalize rural America, empower our producers, invest in the future of American agriculture, and bolster our national security.

More than 200 Members of Congress have never voted for a Farm Bill, so the Committee is intensifying member and staff education in the days and weeks ahead, articulating just how important the Farm Bill is to farmers, ranchers, consumers, and rural America.

There is no piece of legislation that provides a better return on investment than the Farm Bill. For a mere two-tenths of one percent of federal spending, the agriculture sector provides more than 46 million jobs, \$2.6 trillion in wages, \$947 billion in tax revenue, \$202 billion in exports, and \$8.6 trillion in economic activity.

A note on dollars. While this five-year bill has a ten-year projected cost of \$1.5 trillion, much of that is based on the Biden Administration's regulatory abuses. We have an opportunity to course correct, building on what we accomplished in the debt ceiling debate, and further reigning in administrative overreach.

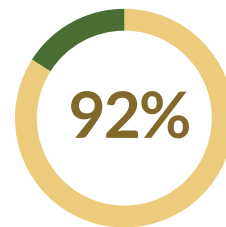


NOTE: total outlays from FY2024 to FY2033 —\$79.9 trillion —excludes offsetting receipts of \$4.56 trillion.

The United States has the safest, most abundant, and most affordable food supply in the history of the world. In 2022, the average American spent an average of 11.3 percent of their disposable personal income on food. In some countries, that figure is as high as 56%. Now more than ever, strong farm policy is essential to ensuring we can keep our food affordable.

Rural America is Republican turf

This Farm Bill will be one that revitalizes rural America. Our top priority is to ensure this Farm Bill is written by farmers, for farmers, by rural America, for rural America, after all, over 92% of all planted acres are in GOP-held districts.



THE FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT: MEANINGFUL SNAP AND PERMITTING REFORMS

During the debt ceiling negotiation, the Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA) did more than prevent a default on our national debt, it also included substantial reforms to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the first meaningful permitting reforms since the 1980s.



While Democrats prefer dependency, Republicans are focused on incremental steps to improve our economy and the livelihood of those participating in it. Simply put, Republicans will continue to instill values like self-reliance and personal responsibility.

SNAP is just as much about nutrition security as it is about financial security, and this bill moves us in the direction of making certain our work-capable adults have access to employment, career, and technical training, and simply put, opportunity.

Key reforms to SNAP in the FRA:

The age of able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDS) shifted from 18-49 to 18-54, with new exceptions for homeless individuals, veterans, and youth aging out of foster care.

States have long had further latitude to further exempt individuals from the ABAWD work requirement who otherwise do not meet statutory exemptions. In the 2018 Farm Bill, this was reduced from 15% to 12%; the FRA further reduced these to 8%.

Additionally, USDA long interpreted the law to allow States to carryover these exemptions; the FRA terminates that interpretation.

Policymakers and the public have never had access to either the State applications for ABAWD waivers nor the Department's response. States like

California and New York have gone to great lengths to ensure their statewide populations of ABAWDs do not have to look for work, let alone volunteer or enroll in further skills-based education. The FRA turns this secrecy on its face, mandating States show the lengths they go to keep employable people idle.

Permitting reform in the FRA:

The FRA includes provisions long sought by Republicans to streamline the federal environmental review process under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The current NEPA process is laden with statutory deficiencies and regulatory abuses, resulting in constant litigation and costly delays for all types of economic activities. These projects include the responsible and timely development of domestic minerals, which are vital inputs for crop protection tools such as fertilizers, and forest management activities, which are vital to forest health and the strength of rural economies.

The FRA:

- Provides commonsense limits to the types of projects that are subject to NEPA review and outlines the level of review required, removing extremist interpretations and never-ending analyses.
- Ensures we spend less time preparing textbook-length environmental documents and more time getting work done on the ground, especially across rural America.
- Enable us to both responsibly develop our nation's energy and natural resources and transform the U.S. into an economic powerhouse.



BIPARTISAN AGRICULTURE LABOR WORKING GROUP

A robust agriculture industry starts with a strong workforce. However, due to a lack of reliable labor, American farmers increasingly turn to overseas workers to fill positions on the farm.

Though not directly in the Committee's jurisdiction, we have a responsibility to be a voice in Congress on the issues and policies impacting farmers and ranchers. In June, Chairman Thompson and Ranking Member David Scott [formed](#) the bipartisan Agricultural Labor Working Group, to focus on the workforce issues faced by the nation's agricultural producers. The working group is [chaired](#) by Rep. Rick Crawford (AR-01) and Rep. Don Davis (NC-01).

This is a complex problem that deserves the focused attention of the Members who hear from producers every day rather than the partisan grandstanding that has plagued these efforts in the past.

By the end of the year, the working group will [produce](#) a final report that will provide a suite of potential solutions that can inform and be utilized in subsequent legislative efforts.

Members of the working group include:

REPUBLICANS

REP. RICK CRAWFORD (AR-01)
REP. LORI CHAVEZ-DEREMER (OR-05)
REP. MONICA DE LA CRUZ (TX-15)
REP. DOUG LAMALFA (CA-01)
REP. NICK LANGWORTHY (NY-23)
REP. DAVID ROUZER (NC-07)
REP. DERRICK VAN ORDEN (WI-03)

DEMOCRATS

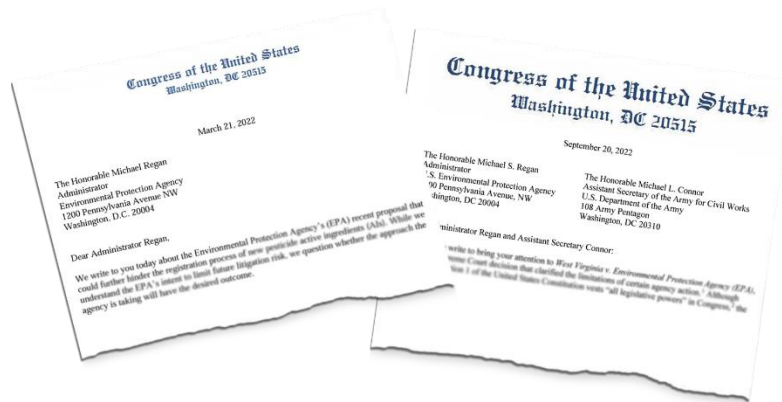
REP. DON DAVIS (NC-01)
REP. YADIRA CARAVEO (CO-08)
REP. SALUD CARBAJAL (CA-24)
REP. JIM COSTA (CA-21)
REP. JASMINE CROCKETT (TX-30)
REP. DARREN SOTO (FL-09)
REP. GABE VASQUEZ (NM-02)

COMBATTING REGULATORY OVERREACH

Farmers, ranchers, and foresters are the original conservationists, and no one cares more for the environment than those whose livelihoods depend on it.

While the scope of the Committee's jurisdiction over Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) actions is limited, nearly every decision coming from the EPA has the potential to disproportionately impact rural America and those living and working there.

The Biden Administration has continuously attempted to expand and weaponize the EPA – creating red tape for our nation's producers, who must navigate nonsensical regulations and overreaching policies.



Historically, the EPA has over-regulated the agriculture industry. In the past few years, the agency has politicized pesticides, a critical crop protection tool that producers rely on to provide the world with affordable and abundant food and fiber.

Additionally, the Biden Administration has attempted to implement a disastrous WOTUS rule that would have given the EPA jurisdiction to mandate ponds and puddles on private, working farmland.

To empower our nation's producers, Chairman Thompson has fought back against President Biden and EPA Administrator Regan's anti-rural America agenda. Chairman Thompson was the first Chair of the House Agriculture Committee in six years to receive testimony from an EPA administrator.

During this hearing, Administrator Regan was grilled on overstepping regulations that impact farmers, ranchers, foresters, and producers nationwide. In addition, Chairman Thompson and members of the committee have sent letters to the EPA demanding addressing the criticism of pesticides.

FINANCIAL INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY ACT



Blockchain technology and digital assets hold real promise. From improving our banking and financial services, to providing data privacy and improving supply chain logistics, these technologies have the potential to transform everyday lives for Americans. As other countries move forward with digital asset regulatory frameworks the U.S. is falling behind.

For nearly a decade, Congress has debated the treatment of digital assets, which has led to numerous hearings, bill introductions, and panel discussions, all trying to bring regulatory certainty and clarity to these novel technologies.

More recently, the Agriculture and Financial Services Committees embarked on a joint effort to finally craft a comprehensive digital asset market structure framework. This work [culminated](#) in the Financial Innovation and Technology for the 21st Century Act which was introduced on July 20, 2023.

Crafting this historic legislative product required receiving an extensive amount of feedback. The Committees have hosted seven [hearings](#), including one field hearing in New York City, one joint [hearing](#), 10 roundtables featuring a wide swath of stakeholders from the digital asset industry, regulatory groups, and staff, and several staff and Member walkthroughs of the legislation.

This bill, which has received wide [praise](#) from diverse stakeholders and [media](#), will establish a much-needed regulatory framework that protects consumers and investors and fosters American leadership in the digital asset space.

CONSERVING OUR FORESTS

FORESTRY GETTING ATTENTION EARLY IN FARM BILL DRAFTING

JUNE 28, 2023 | BY: STEVE DAVIES



Due to years of mismanagement, wildfires across the West have plagued rural and forested communities. Our nation's forest health has reached a crisis level. In the past five years alone, we have seen some of the most destructive wildfires on record. **It doesn't have to be this way.**

Since 2000, we have averaged more than 70,000 wildfires per year and an average of 7 million acres burned annually. This acreage is more than double the average number during the 1990s. Since 2018, we've had four fire seasons that have exceeded seven million acres, including 2020, when 10.1 million acres burned.

We don't even have a fire season anymore, it's a fire year.

Chairman Thompson created the Subcommittee on Forestry to combat this urgent crisis and appointed Congressman LaMalfa, representative of one of our nation's most densely forested regions, to be chairman.

We have allowed our forest health and management to fall behind for too long. The House Agriculture Committee is committed to shedding light on this ongoing emergency and implementing common sense change to manage our forest system.