



# HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

## FARM BILL TOP 10 HIGHLIGHTS

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### FARM POLICY

The Agriculture & Nutrition Act of 2018 works to address the 5-year, 52-percent decline in the farm economy by providing certainty that an extension of current policy cannot provide. The bill reauthorizes and strengthens the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) options through 2023. Producers are given an opportunity to make a new election between ARC and PLC with several improvements, including allowing a new yield update opportunity for producers who were facing severe drought during the previous yield update, allowing reference prices to adjust to improved market conditions, and prioritizing the use of RMA data for administering ARC to minimize disparities between counties.

### NUTRITION

Over 35 improvements are made to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the nation's flagship nutrition program. Most notably, existing work requirements are strengthened, streamlined and paired with a variety of options to increase opportunities for SNAP recipients, including participating in a fully-funded, guaranteed Employment & Training (E&T) slot. Individuals may choose not to participate, but they will no longer be eligible for SNAP. The farm bill maintains vital nutrition assistance for those in need while making a historic commitment to helping recipients improve their outlook in life.

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### TRADE

Given escalating use of illegal trade actions by foreign countries, the farm bill stands by our nation's farmers and ranchers, providing a strengthened safety net and authorizing and restoring funding for vital tools for trade promotion and market development. The farm bill also maintains long-standing legal authority for the secretary to provide assistance to farmers and ranchers affected by unfair foreign trading practices.

### CONSERVATION

The farm bill prioritizes working-lands conservation by retaining and folding the best features of the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) into the nation's flagship incentive-based program for voluntary conservation—the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). This supports and enables a significant investment in emerging conservation practices like the use of cover crops.

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### CROP INSURANCE

At the request of virtually every farmer, rural banker and rural business in the country, the farm bill protects crop insurance. Some improvements are made but, overall, the farm bill doesn't fix what isn't broken.

### REGULATORY REFORM

One of the most consistent complaints policymakers hear from farmers and ranchers is about burdensome regulations. The farm bill streamlines and reduces regulatory burdens. For example, the bill includes commonsense reforms to the onerous and conflicting Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultation process regarding pesticide registration activities to ensure agricultural producers have access to the safest and most efficient modern crop protection tools. And, the bill cuts red-tape across the conservation programs, eliminating unnecessary and burdensome Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM) registration requirements for producers.

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### RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Rural areas of the U.S. should have the same access to broadband and infrastructure that urban areas do. The bill authorizes substantial annual appropriations for rural broadband and requires USDA to establish forward-looking broadband standards. The farm bill also strengthens the suite of rural development initiatives to promote jobs and economic activity in rural America where employment is suffering due to the sharp downturn in the farm economy. Finally, the farm bill provides the secretary the authority to prioritize projects that help communities meet the challenges of the opioid crisis.

### ANIMAL HEALTH

The Agriculture & Nutrition Act of 2018 establishes a new National Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Program, designed to protect the health of the nation's livestock sector. The program is modeled on the highly successful Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Program that has strengthened USDA's ability to protect U.S. agriculture and natural resources from foreign plant pest threats. The bill also establishes a new U.S.-only vaccine bank with priority for stockpiling Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) vaccine and provides for the enhancement of the National Animal Health Laboratory Network.



### SPECIALTY & ORGANIC CROPS

Specialty crops play an important role in the success of U.S. agriculture and are an essential component of our national food policy. The farm bill restores funding for Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC) under the new International Market Development Program. It also seeks to expand and improve crop insurance policies for specialty crops. The bill reauthorizes several programs that support marketing and promotion of these crops. It also makes key improvements to the Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI) and the Specialty Crop Block Grant program, while maintaining funding. Finally, the bill increases funding for the Organic Agriculture Research & Extension Initiative (OREI) and provides resources for combatting fraudulent imports of organic products coming into the U.S.

### BEGINNING FARMERS & RANCHERS

The bill maintains several provisions to help beginning farmers and ranchers establish themselves in agriculture. The bill enhances access to crop insurance and establishes a scholarship program at 1890 Land Grant Institutions designed to assist students interested in careers in agriculture. Many of the challenges faced by beginning farmers and ranchers are intrinsically linked to those retiring producers. The 2018 Farm Bill establishes the "Commission on Farm Transitions – Needs for 2050" to examine additional policy changes needed to ensure that the U.S. maintains the safest, most abundant and most affordable food and fiber supply in the world.



This is a bipartisan bill – reflecting both Republican and Democrat priorities.

This bill makes investments in opportunities for SNAP recipients and improves program integrity, while delivering much-needed support and certainty to the countryside.