



The Rural Prosperity and Food Security Act

Keeping Farmers Farming, Families Fed, and Rural Communities Strong:

- **Makes investments to strengthen the farm safety net;** supports beginning, underserved, and small farmers and ranchers; and focuses assistance on the farmers with dirt under their fingernails and not billionaire and foreign investors.
- **Helps families working hard to make ends meet** by investing in nutrition assistance that puts food on the table, increasing access to fruits and vegetables, and supporting people on their path to self-sufficiency while cracking down on bad actors.
- **Improves the quality of life in rural communities** by improving rural health care, childcare, and education; creating-good paying jobs; expanding access to high-speed internet; and lowering costs for families and businesses.

A Strong, Bipartisan Path Forward:

- **The Rural Prosperity and Food Security Act contains more than 100 bipartisan bills** to keep farmers farming, families fed, and rural communities strong.
- **Senate Democrats are showing leadership by putting forward a bill that reflects bipartisan priorities** and meets the needs of farmers, families, and communities.
- Unfortunately, Republicans are pursuing the same, failed strategy in the House from 2013 and 2018 of playing politics with food assistance and splitting the Farm Bill coalition. **Senate Democrats have a proposal that holds together the broad coalition** of farmers, nutrition and hunger advocates, conservationists, and the climate community that has always been the foundation of a successful, bipartisan Farm Bill.

Building on Historic Progress:

- **The Rural Prosperity and Food Security Act builds on the historic progress** we have made for rural communities, families, and farmers in addressing the climate crisis in the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act*, *the Inflation Reduction Act*, *the American Rescue Plan*, and others.

- **Ensures that SNAP reflects the realities of how Americans buy and prepare food** by continuing the 5-year re-evaluation to the TFP included in the bipartisan 2018 Farm Bill.
- **Keeps kids fed by building on significant investments to end childhood hunger** through appropriations bills, the *American Rescue Plan*, *Access to Baby Formula Act*, *Keep Kids Fed Act*, *Families First Coronavirus Response Act* and *CARES Act*.
- **Brings the historic investment in climate-smart agriculture from the IRA into the Farm Bill** to address the climate crisis now and into the future.
- **Doubles down on our commitment to rural prosperity** by investing in quality of life, lowering costs, and growing the rural economy.

The Next Steps:

- **Any successful Farm Bill will require the bipartisan support** of our Republican colleagues and partners in the House. We hope that this will spur Republicans to return to the negotiating table in good faith and join us in reaching a bipartisan compromise that can be signed into law by the end of the year. Our farmers and ranchers need the certainty of a five-year Farm Bill.

The Rural Prosperity and Food Security Act Summary

The Rural Prosperity and Food Security Act focuses on keeping farmers farming, families fed, and rural communities strong. It includes over 100 bipartisan bills and keeps the successful Farm Bill coalition together so that a bill can get across the legislative finish line in 2024.

Keeping Farmers Farming:

- **Builds on a successful, market-based approach** that provides support to farmers when disasters outside of their control strike and focuses assistance on the farmers with dirt under their fingernails and not billionaire and foreign investors.
- **Improves crop insurance** by making the most common, area-based, crop insurance more affordable while preserving access to commodity price support programs.
- **Improves Whole Farm and Micro Farm** insurance policies.
- **Provides certainty to farmers** by making payments under the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program and the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) more likely to trigger and improves emergency disaster assistance. Under the bill, all major covered commodities will see at least a 5% increase in reference prices during the 2024 Farm Bill, with many seeing 10-15% increases.
- **Supports beginning farmers** by providing premium discounts on crop insurance and new opportunities to access commodity programs, improving access to credit, supporting education and training for the next generation of agriculture professionals, and creating a new program to support agriculture programs at community colleges around the country.
- **Builds the groundwork for an agriculture research moonshot** by fostering public-private partnerships through investments in the Foundation for Food and Agriculture Research (FFAR), strengthening USDA's research programs, and investing in land-grant universities.
- **Permanently funds student scholarships at 1890 Institutions** and upholds our commitment to students in 1994 Tribal colleges and minority-serving institutions.
- **Strengthens support for specialty crops** by including the first ever specialty crops crop insurance subtitle, ensuring that specialty crop farmers have a voice in policy decisions, accelerating the development of new technology by boosting research investments, and expanding support for the successful Specialty Crop Block Grant program.

- **Supports trade programs** that build on a \$1.2 billion investment outside the bill secured by Chairwoman Stabenow and Ranking Member Boozman that will effectively double USDA funding to develop new markets for American agriculture over the next 5 years.
- **Supports small farms** by creating an Office of Small Farms to advance small farm policy and sets aside dedicated funding for popular, voluntary conservation practices.
- **Recognizes the importance and growth of urban agriculture** by providing technical assistance, new funding opportunities, and better access to USDA programs.
- **Invests in the connection between farmers and the community** by cultivating regional food systems through public-private partnerships, promoting local agriculture, and supporting value-added production.
- **Protects producers, consumers, and the economy** from devastating animal disease by increasing funding for early detection, rapid response, and recovery from animal disease outbreaks, including Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI).
- **Builds on the successful Dairy Margin Coverage** safety net to help dairy farmers protect against milk price drops or high feed costs.
- **Promotes competition for American livestock producers** by expanding options for processing and ensuring fair competition practices in the marketplace.
- **Supports growth in the organic agriculture industry**, protects the integrity of the organic seal, and expands technical assistance and market opportunities for existing organic farmers and those just getting into the business.
- **Strengthens the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network** to support farmer mental health and manage stress as they navigate one of the riskiest businesses in the world.
- **Backs American farmers' ability to use common names** like parmesan and bologna for marketing products sold around the world.
- **Supports American farmers** by continuing to provide American grown food to address growing rates of global hunger.

Keeping Families Fed:

- **Helps millions of Americans make ends meet by continuing the 5-year update to the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP)** included in the bipartisan 2018 Farm Bill, which helps ensure that nutrition assistance reflects the realities of how Americans buy and prepare food.
- **Cracks down on bad actors** to strengthen the integrity of nutrition assistance without jeopardizing food access.
- **Removes the lifetime ban on nutrition assistance for individuals convicted of a drug related felony**, ensuring that people who have paid their debt to society can access the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and build pathways to self-sufficiency.
- **Establishes a path for residents of Puerto Rico** – who are American citizens – to participate in SNAP after more than 40 years of being excluded from the program.
- **Improves access to nutrition assistance** for college students, military families, and seniors.
- **Increases access to fruits and vegetables** by expanding the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (double-up bucks) and Produce Prescriptions.
- **Increases funding for food banks** and makes the Farm to Food Bank program permanent, improves access to Kosher, Halal, and culturally relevant food, increases procurement of fruits and vegetables, and provides food procurement flexibility for geographically isolated states and territories.
- **Supports people on their path to finding long-term, sustainable jobs** by improving the SNAP Employment and Training Program.
- **Increases funding for nutrition education**, providing the tools and information people need to eat healthier meals, and improving SNAP training for health care professionals.
- **Explores allowing hot foods** like rotisserie chicken to be purchased with SNAP benefits.

Keeping Rural Communities Strong:

- **Improves quality of life for rural families** by improving rural health care.
- **Takes a new, comprehensive approach to address rural childcare** needs by prioritizing projects that address the availability, quality, and cost of childcare in rural communities.

- **Equips rural communities to lead public-private partnerships** through a new Rural Partnership Program and builds on the success of the Biden Administration's Rural Partners Network.
- **Invests in growing the middle class and creating good-paying jobs** in rural America by supporting manufacturing, entrepreneurship, small businesses, and rural cooperatives.
- **Creates good-paying jobs in the bioeconomy** by promoting home-grown biofuels including sustainable aviation fuel that are critical to strengthening energy security at home and supporting biobased innovation through the development of new renewable chemicals, biobased plastics, and other products.
- **Recognizes the value of workers in our food system** and gives them a seat at the table when decisions are being made at USDA.
- **Lowers energy costs and generates new sources of income** while reducing carbon emissions that contribute to the climate crisis by supporting renewable energy and energy efficiency.
- **Expands access to high-speed internet** by strengthening the popular and bipartisan ReConnect Program.
- **Supports and grows local and regional food systems** and increases access to local products from local farmers to keep money in the local economy.
- **Makes critical investments in public water and wastewater systems** that rural communities across the country rely on and addresses emerging contaminants like PFAS.
- **Recognizes Tribal communities** in every title of the bill with more than 50 provisions that improve tribal access to USDA programs and resources.
- **Supports timber innovation** and American wood products, markets, and energy.
- **Strengthens our regional food supply chain** by providing financing opportunities for food and agriculture businesses to invest in infrastructure for middle of supply chain operations.

Protecting Our Land, Air, and Water while confronting the Climate Crisis:

- **Brings all of the conservation funding from the Inflation Reduction Act into the Farm Bill and maintains its focus on addressing the climate crisis.** This funding will bolster the programs that put cash into farmers' pockets to put popular, voluntary conservation practices to work on farms and ranches. It also continues the historic investment in clean, renewable energy to tackle the climate crisis by reducing greenhouse gas emissions on and off the farm.

- **Permanently authorizes conservation programs for the first time** and increases access to climate-smart agriculture and conservation resources.
- **Makes addressing the climate crisis a specific goal** of the Regional Conservation Partnership Program for the first time.
- **Places a new focus on reducing methane**, a potent greenhouse gas, in the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and sets aside funding for small farms.
- **Improves the Conservation Stewardship Program** by adding a new focus on transitioning farmers to be more resilient to the changing climate, reducing greenhouse gases, and building soil health.
- **Leverages our forests as a key tool to address the climate crisis**, expands efforts to plant trees in communities across the country, and establishes the Office of Urban and Community Forestry to expand green spaces, mitigate stormwater runoff, and improve the quality of life in urban and suburban communities.
- **Addresses wildfire risk** through science-based restoration and increases the pace and scale of forest management to protect communities and vulnerable ecosystems from wildfire.
- **Designates over 100,000 acres of forest as wilderness** – the largest acreage ever protected in a Farm Bill.
- **Establishes climate hubs** to develop local tools and resources to address the climate crisis.