
EWG FARM BILL PLATFORM

This year's effort to renew America's food and farm policy through the farm bill creates an opportunity for Congress to do more to support family farmers, protect the environment, encourage healthy diets and better access to healthy food – all while supporting working families. EWG believes that Congress should enact farm and food policy legislation that: provides producers with an effective safety net at lower cost to taxpayers; creates new markets for farm products; invests in conservation and nutrition programs that benefit all farmers and consumers; promotes increased consumption of fruits and vegetables; delivers greater transparency and accountability; and meets the nation's deficit reduction goals.

In particular, Congress should:



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Support Family Farmers

Congress should support family farmers by ending subsidies that flow to the largest farm businesses regardless of need. In particular, Congress should:

- End direct payments – Congress should end direct farm payments, which are provided regardless of need.
- Replace insurance subsidies with free yield insurance – Congress should replace costly insurance subsidies for commodity “program crops” such as corn, wheat, soybeans, cotton and rice with yield insurance policies designed to help farmers recover from “deep” losses caused by bad weather.
- Maintain the conservation compact – Congress should ensure that farmers implement practices that protect wetlands, grasslands and soil health in exchange for a taxpayer-financed safety net, including farm insurance.
- Support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers – Congress should reform farm subsidy programs so as to level the playing field for all farmers and invest in programs that help beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers by easing access to conservation, crop insurance, credit, loan and grant programs.
- Expand local and regional markets – Congress should invest in loan and grant programs that help create local and regional markets for farm products.

Support Stewardship

Congress should invest in research and provide incentives for farmers and ranchers to protect and restore water quality and wildlife habitat. In particular, Congress should:

- Reject cuts to conservation – Congress should reject cuts to voluntary conservation programs and instead provide \$30 billion over the next five years to share with farmers the cost of a clean environment.
- Promote collaborative partnerships – Congress should deliver 25 percent of conservation funding in grants selected for their potential for environmental benefit and awarded to groups of farmers and local partners working together.
- Reform easement and incentive programs – Congress should reform conservation programs to achieve administrative efficiencies, better target incentive and easement funds and provide loans for infrastructure projects.

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- Support organic food – Congress should invest in grant and loan programs that help farmers switch to organic food production.
 - Support research – Support and modify research, education and extension programs to better focus on organic and sustainable crop and livestock production and healthy food.

Support Healthy Diets

Fewer than 5 percent of American adults eat USDA-recommended amounts of fruits and vegetables, and more than one-third are obese, increasing the nation's health care costs by \$127 billion a year.

To support healthy diets, Congress should:

- Support Feeding Assistance Programs – Congress should protect and strengthen SNAP and other nutrition assistance programs.
- Support Nutrition Education – Congress should support efforts to help Americans eat healthier diets through nutrition education.
- Promote Fruit and Vegetable Consumption – Congress should strengthen the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program and reform specialty crop programs so as to increase consumption of local fruits and vegetables.
- Increase Access to Healthy Food – Congress should provide grants for incentive programs that encourage SNAP recipients to buy and consume more fruits and vegetables, including at farmers markets and other food retailers.
- Support Better School Food – Congress should allow schools to use more school lunch and breakfast funds to purchase local fruits and vegetables.
- Maintain funding for research – Congress should underwrite sound research on nutrition, hunger and food security, and obesity prevention.

EWG is a nonprofit research and advocacy organization with offices in Washington, DC; Oakland, Calif.; and Ames, Iowa. EWG uses the power of information to educate the public and decision-makers about a wide range of environmental issues, especially those affecting public health.

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