



## FARM BILL ENDORSEMENTS

The House Agriculture Committee has a long tradition of bipartisan cooperation, which is the key ingredient to passing a Farm Bill into law. We are pleased that the Committee is working to advance the goal of a Farm Bill that supports agricultural producers, invests in rural communities, supports American nutritional needs, and boosts American agricultural competitiveness. The New Democrat Coalition's [Farm Bill Task Force](#) will continue to collaborate with the Agriculture Committee, House Leadership, and other stakeholders to produce a strong and bipartisan package that meets the needs of American agricultural producers and consumers. Building off of our five core [policy priorities](#) for a Farm Bill, the New Dems will work to ensure that a final Farm Bill includes the following endorsed legislation led or co-led by New Dem Members:

1. Invest in rural communities and rural broadband
  - [H.R. 4351](#), Rep. Stacey Plaskett (VI-AL) - *Broadband Internet for Small Ports Act*. This bipartisan bill would prioritize broadband grant and loan applications from small ports in rural areas to be equal to those that are developed with the participation of a non-profit or philanthropic organization.
  - [H.R. 5203](#), Rep. Jennifer Wexton (VA-10)- *AGRITOURISM Act*. This bipartisan bill establishes an office within the Department of Agriculture to promote agritourism activities and businesses.
  - [H.R. 1450](#), Rep. Derek Kilmer (WA-06) - *Treating Tribes and Counties as Good Neighbors Act*. This bipartisan bill revises the Good Neighbor Authority program to modify the treatment of revenue from timber sale contracts under good neighbor agreements to require Indian tribes and counties to retain revenue generated from timber sales under a good neighbor agreement; and allows states, counties, and Indian tribes to use such revenue for authorized restoration projects on non federal lands under a good neighbor agreement.
  - [H.R. 2386](#), Rep. Derek Kilmer (WA-06), Rep Annie Kuster (NH-02) - *Community Wood Facilities Assistance Act of 2023*. This bipartisan bill would strengthen and modernize the Community Wood Energy and

Wood Innovation Grant Program and the Wood Innovations Grant Program.

- [H.R. 3238](#), Rep. Suzan DelBene (WA-01), Don Beyer (VA-08), Jimmy Panetta (CA-19) - *Affordable Housing Credit Improvement Act*. This bipartisan bill would amend Title 12 to increase LIHTC resources to address the urgent need for additional affordable housing supply and economic development in rural areas.
  - [H.R. 2787](#), Rep. Terri Sewell (AL-07) - *Rural Decentralized Water Systems Reauthorization Act*. This bipartisan bill expands and strengthens the existing USDA Rural Decentralized Water Systems Program to support low- and moderate-income households' installation or upgrade of water well and wastewater systems.
  - [H.R. 3809](#), Rep. Don Davis (NC-01), Rep. Angie Craig (MN-02), Rep. Abigail Spanberger (VA-07) – *Cybersecurity for Rural Water Systems Act*. This bipartisan bill would expand the successful rural water circuit rider program to include cybersecurity technical assistance and authorize funding to hire a cybersecurity circuit rider for all 50 states.
  - [H.R. 5113](#), Rep. Derek Kilmer (WA-06) - *REACH Our Tribes Act*. This bipartisan bill implements GAO recommendations that USDA consult with tribes on budgets and the Farm Bill, share data on funds provided to tribes, and streamline economic development applications.
  - [H.R. 4713](#), Rep. Derek Kilmer (WA-06) - *Rural Hospital Technical Assistance Program Act*. This bipartisan bill codifies a rural hospital technical assistance program under Rural Development.
2. Address the modern nutritional needs of Americans and provide innovations for program efficiency.
- [H.R. 5048](#) (117th Congress, Reintroduction Expected), Rep. Annie Kuster (NH-02), Rep. Jimmy Panetta (CA-19) - *SNAP Act of 2021*. This bill allows for verbal signature for SNAP forms via telephone.
  - [H.R. 652](#), Rep. Julia Brownley (CA-26), Rep. Annie Kuster (NH-02) - *Zero Food Waste Act*. This bill directs the Environmental Protection Agency to establish a grant program to study and reduce food waste.
  - [H.R.4185](#), Rep. Kim Schrier (WA-08) - *The Expanding Access to (EAT) Healthy Foods from Local Farmers Act*. This bill will improve TEFAP by providing emergency feeding organizations with better access to fresh, healthy food. It will also create a permanent home for much of the work USDA is currently piloting through the Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program.
  - [H.R. 1230](#), Rep. André Carson (IN-07) - *Food Deserts Act*. This bill would create USDA-funded, state-operated revolving funds that will issue low-interest loans for the operation of grocery stores in food deserts. The bill ensures that recipients of these loans, including non-profit, for-profit

and municipal entities, can provide affordable, healthy food, including fresh produce and staples like milk, bread, and meat.

- [H.R. 3183](#), Rep. Josh Harder (CA-10), Rep. Jimmy Panetta (CA-19), Rep. Jim Costa (CA-21), Rep. Kim Schrier (WA-08) - *EATS Act of 2023*. This bill permanently expands SNAP eligibility to college students.
  - [H.R. 706](#), Rep. Shontel Brown (OH-11) - *SNAP Access for Medically Vulnerable Children Act of 2023*. This bill would improve the Excess Medical Expense Deduction to include children that suffer from one or more chronic conditions. Under this bill, SNAP households could deduct allowable expenses over \$35 incurred by a sick child and, as a result, may qualify for a higher SNAP benefit.
  - [H.R. 4103](#), Rep. Shontel Brown (OH-11) - *EBT Act*. This bill would make permanent a temporary protection from new transaction fees first established in the 2018 Farm Bill.
  - [H.R. 1763](#), Rep. Jimmy Panetta (CA-19) - *Military Family Nutrition Act of 2023*. This bipartisan bill would remove the military's basic allowance for housing from income calculations used to determine SNAP eligibility.
3. Provide farmers, ranchers, and other landowners who feed and fuel our nation with certainty from diversified income streams and greater supports to beginner, young, and socially disadvantaged producers.
- [H.R. 6003](#) (117th Congress, Reintroduction Expected), Rep. Annie Kuster (NH-02) - *Veteran and Beginning Farmers Assistance Act*. This bipartisan bill extends through FY2028 and makes other changes to a technology transfer program for assisting agricultural producers in rural areas. Among the changes, the bill (1) incorporates a specific focus on beginning, socially disadvantaged, and veteran farmers and ranchers; and (2) expands the scope of the assistance to include improving farm viability, strengthening supply chains, and increasing resilience to extreme weather through conservation practices.
  - [H.R. 4127](#), Rep. Jimmy Panetta (CA-19), Rep. Jim Costa (CA-21) - *Fair Access to Agriculture Disaster Programs Act*. This bipartisan bill changes the adjusted gross income for USDA disaster programs, including exempting the \$900,000 AGI limitation for the Emergency Assistance for Livestock and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP), Tree Assistance Program (TAP), and the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) for producers that get 75% of their income from farming or related farming practices.
  - [H.R. 4059](#), Rep. Elissa Slotkin (MI-07), Rep. Jimmy Panetta (CA-19) - *To include phosphate and potash on the final list of critical minerals of the Department of the Interior*. This bipartisan bill will require DOI to add Potash and Phosphate to the 2022 Critical Minerals list and ask for

permitting reform recommendations to increase domestic production of the two minerals.

- [H.R. 1697](#), Rep. Don Davis (NC-01) - *Promoting Precision Agriculture Act of 2023*. This bipartisan bill would establish a partnership between the federal government and the private sector to create voluntary interconnectivity standards and prioritize the cybersecurity needs for precision agriculture technologies.
- [H.R. 4173](#), Rep. Salud Carbajal (CA-24), Rep. Abigail Spanberger (VA-07), Rep. Jim Costa (CA-21) - *Advancing Automation Research and Development in Agriculture Act*. This bipartisan bill would provide \$20 million in annual mandatory spending to establish a new, standalone program that prioritizes mechanization and automation for specialty crops. Such retraining could particularly emphasize retraining production-oriented employees to operate and maintain newly created machinery and systems to ensure the workforce of tomorrow will be ready to operate the farms of tomorrow.
- [H.R. 3815](#), Rep. Chrissy Houlahan (PA-06) - *Protecting Mushroom Farmers Act*. This bipartisan bill would require the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to conduct a study on the benefits of providing crop insurance for mushroom farmers. This study would analyze various threats to production, such as inclement weather and pests uniquely harmful to mushrooms, and their impact on farmers' ability to grow mushrooms and maintain profitability.
- [H.R. 3755](#), Rep. Chrissy Houlahan (PA-06) - *The Industrial Hemp Act of 2023*. This bipartisan bill would create a separate classification for industrial hemp and establish a framework that punishes bad actors.
- [H.R. 3904](#), Rep. Angie Craig (MN-02) - *Crop Insurance for Future Farmers Act*. This bipartisan bill supports young and beginning farmers by expanding the definition of a beginning farmer by five years. The current Farm Service Agency definition gives "Beginning Farmer" status to someone with five crop years or less and allows them to qualify for a 10% subsidy. This legislation expands that definition to the first ten years and provides a 15% subsidy for the first five years, with the remaining five years going back down to a 10% subsidy. This additional subsidy will help lower barriers to farming and make it more affordable for newcomers.
- [H.R. 5381](#), Rep. Kim Schrier (WA-08) - *RNGR Support Act of 2023*. This bipartisan bill would codify and authorize the RNGR program with its own budget line item and funding and allow RNGR to serve as a convener of nursery, tree improvement, and tree planting interests nationwide.
- *No Bill Number*, Rep. Gabe Vasquez (NM-02). Intends to file the *Ranching Without Red Tape Act* to cut down on permitting requirements for ranchers, and to introduce categorical exclusions for ranchers to make minor range improvements like fencelines, wells, and stock tanks without having to renegotiate their permits.

4. Ensure farmers and ranchers have access to world class research and the resources necessary for successful trade promotion and marketing in order to expand international markets.
  - [H.R. 648](#), Jimmy Panetta (CA-19), Kim Schrier (WA-08), Jim Costa (CA-21) - *Agriculture Export Promotion Act of 2023*. This bipartisan bill increases funding for export promotion programs.
  - [H.R. 679](#), Rep. Kim Schrier (WA-08), Rick Larsen (WA-02) - *To amend the Agricultural Research, Extension, and Education Reform Act of 1998 to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to waive the matching funds requirement under the specialty crop research initiative, and for other purposes*. This bipartisan bill would allow the Secretary of Agriculture to waive the Specialty Crops Research Initiative matching funds requirement.
  - [H.R. 4135](#), Rep. Kim Schrier (WA-08), Rep. Deborah Ross (NC-02) - *AG RESEARCH Act*. The AG RESEARCH Act provides \$1 billion in mandatory funding over 5 years (\$200 million annually) plus an additional \$1 billion authorization of appropriations over 5 years for the Research Facilities Act. The RFA funding will support competitive grants to land-grant universities and non-land-grant colleges of agriculture for facility construction, alteration, acquisition, modernization, renovation, or remodeling.
  
5. Recognize the important role the agriculture and forestry sector continues to have on our local environment and the opportunity the Farm Bill provides to build upon historic investments in carbon sequestration and sustainable land management, expand jobs in communities, and most importantly, enhance and protect our food supply chain from the field to America's dinner table.
  - [H.R. 3424](#), Rep. Annie Kuster (NH-02) - *Forest Conservation Easement Program Act of 2023*. This bipartisan bill would provide mandatory funding to purchase development rights via conservation easements from private and tribal landowners. This program would replace and expand the Healthy Forest Reserve Program and offer flexibility in two easement options.
  - [H.R. 5051](#), Rep. Abigail Spanberger (VA-07) - *Rural Energy for America (REAP) Modernization Act of 2023*. This bipartisan bill would modify and provide additional funding for the REAP program, and focus it on greenhouse gas emission reduction.
  - [H.R. 2791](#) (117th Congress, Reintroduction Expected), Rep. Stacey Plaskett (VI-AL), Rep. Darren Soto (FL-09) - *Renewable Energy for Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands Act*. This bipartisan bill creates a grant program at the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) for renewable energy development in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
  - [H.R. 3478](#), Rep. Sean Casten (IL-06), Rep. Elissa Slotkin (MI-07) - *Conservation Opportunity and Voluntary Environment Resilience (COVER)*

- Program Act*. This bipartisan bill creates a Good Steward Cover Crop Program to subsidize farmers who use cover crops.
- [H.R. 2429](#), Rep. Susie Lee (NV-03) - *Open Access Evapotranspiration Data Act*. This bipartisan bill directs the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to establish an Open Access Evapotranspiration (OpenET) Data Program under which the USGS shall provide for delivering satellite-based evapotranspiration data to advance the quantification of evaporation and consumptive water use. The bill defines Evapotranspiration as the process by which water is transferred from the land to the atmosphere by evaporation from soil and other surfaces and transpiration from plants.
  - [H.R. 4018](#), Rep. Jim Costa (CA-21) - *Headwaters Protection Act*. This bipartisan bill would make improvements to the Watershed Protection Program and reauthorize the program.
  - [H.R. 3867](#), Rep. Joe Morelle (NY-25), Rep. Chrissy Houlahan (PA-06) - *Spotted Lanternfly Research and Development Act*. This bipartisan bill would designate the Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) as a high priority research and extension initiative under the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA). High priority designation would authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to make competitive grants available to colleges and universities for research projects related to the mitigation of the SLF.
  - [H.R. 1645](#), Rep. Kim Schrier (WA-08) - *Biochar Research Network Act of 2023*. This bipartisan bill establishes a National Biochar Research Network to test the impact of biochar across various soil types, application methods, and climates to learn more about its capacity to benefit farmers and the environment.
  - [H.R. 3990](#), Rep. Kim Schrier (WA-08) - *Forest Data Modernization Act*. This bipartisan bill would modernize data collection efforts of the USFS Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program to meet the needs of forestry stakeholders to access standardized, high-quality data to support sustainable forest management decisions.
  - [H.R. 4017](#), Rep. Jim Costa (CA-21) - *Conservation Improvement Act of 2023*. This bill amends the Conservation Reserve Program to increase participation and provide producers with additional conservation tools.
  - [H.R. 5044](#), Rep. Andrea Salinas (OR-06) - *Timber Innovation for Building Rural Communities Act*. This bipartisan bill requires the USDA to establish a platform for measuring, monitoring, verifying and reporting data about the carbon impacts from forest management and wood products, and establishes pilot programs for demonstrations.
  - [H.R. 5043](#), Rep. Andrea Salinas (OR-06), Rep. Sean Casten (IL-06) - *Healthy Soils Healthy Climate Act of 2023*. This bill provides funding to expand the On-Farm Trials for soil health through EQIP's Conservation Innovation Grants.
  - [H.R. 4327](#), Rep. Jim Costa (CA-21) - *Converting our Waste Sustainably (COWS) Act*. This bipartisan bill would create a standalone program for

alternative manure management conservation practices for dairy producers, and support additional practices to help reduce methane efforts.

- [H.R. 3442](#) (117th Congress, Reintroduction expected), Rep. Kim Schrier (WA-08)- *National Prescribed Fire Act of 2021*. This bipartisan bill would invest in hazardous fuels management by increasing the pace and scale of prescribed burns, create a technically skilled preseason controlled burn workforce, and streamline smoke regulations in winter months to reduce catastrophic fires and smoke in the summer.

New Dems also believe that the Agriculture Committee should reject efforts to undermine key nutrition programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). In particular, efforts that would make sweeping changes to program eligibility or benefits would be counterproductive to the goal of a bipartisan Farm Bill that can pass into law. It is imperative that Americans not lose access to critical supports that keep them and their families fed, healthy, and contributing to society.

Finally, we ask the Committee to oppose efforts to cut funding, or otherwise undermine, critical Title II programs and technical assistance within the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). We ask you to recognize the high demand for these programs among producers - and the critical work our farmers, ranchers, and landowners are doing to positively contribute to their local environment and community health - by rejecting efforts to undermine these investments.