



HOUSE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

FARM BILL: BEGINNING FARMERS & RANCHERS

In more than three years of preparing for the farm bill, our committee heard from numerous stakeholders about the importance of aiding beginning farmers and ranchers (including socially disadvantaged and veteran farmers and ranchers). New and young farmers may lack access to the tools and resources needed to build or expand their operations, access the latest technology or manage downturns in the farm economy. Previous farm bills authorized several provisions that provide dedicated resources to help beginning farmers and ranchers transition to farming or ranching. The Agriculture & Nutrition Act of 2018 enhances those efforts:

THE FARM BILL:

- Establishes the “Commission on Farm Transitions – Needs for 2050” to address needs relative to maintaining and strengthening a vital farm sector for the future. Ensuring the next generation of farmers and ranchers are in place to meet that need is a key goal in its creation;
- Creates a new Agricultural Youth Organization Coordinator position at USDA to promote the role of agricultural education and youth-serving organizations in motivating and preparing young people to pursue careers in agriculture, food and natural resources;
- Extends the beginning farmer discount in crop insurance to 10 years for those purchasing Whole Farm Revenue Protection (WFRP) plans of insurance and maintains the 5-year discount for other policies. The discount helps to make insurance—which most lenders require for highly leveraged borrowers—more affordable while beginning farmers build equity;
- Reauthorizes the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) which helps fund training, education, outreach, and technical assistance to beginning farmers and ranchers;
- Continues Value-Added Producer Grants to give beginning farmers, including veterans, who produce value-added products priority consideration for grants;
- Reauthorizes the outreach and assistance for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and veteran farmers and ranchers, which provides resources, outreach, and technical assistance through grants;
- Maintains the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) Transition Incentives Program which facilitates transfers of CRP land enrolled in an expiring contract from retired/retiring farmer to a beginning, veteran or underserved farmer or rancher who returns land to production;
- Maintains Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) set-asides for beginning farmers or ranchers and socially disadvantaged producers while including a priority for veteran farmers. Producers under these set asides would also be eligible for up to 90% cost-share for EQIP and to have up to 50% of upfront project costs covered;



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Continues the managed haying and grazing of CRP lands which waives the 25% payment reduction for beginning farmers;

Reauthorizes the Conservation Loan and Loan Guarantee Program, maintaining the conservation loan guarantee amount from 75% to 90% of the total loan amount for producers qualifying as beginning farmers or ranchers;

Amends the Farm Ownership Loan Program, to grant the secretary enhanced flexibility to allow military experience or agriculture education to qualify for a portion of the 3-year farming or ranching experience requirement to becoming an eligible borrower;

Reauthorizes the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Individual Development Accounts Pilot Program, which authorizes matching-funds for savings accounts to meet farming-related expenses; and

Reserves loan fund set-asides, which is a portion of the guaranteed farm ownership loan and direct operating loan funds, for beginning farmers and ranchers.