

Bill number	H.R. 2364
Title	Local Food and Farm Support Act
Sponsor / Co-sponsors	Sponsored by Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) Co-sponsors: Rep. Thomas Allen (D-ME), Rep. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Rep. Donald Payne (D-NJ), Janice Schakowsky (D-IL), Rep. Nancy Boyda (D-KS), Rep. Steve Kagen (D-WI), Rep. Bobby Rush (D-IL)
Description	To promote expanded economic opportunities for farmers and ranchers through local and regional markets, expand access to healthy food in underserved communities, provide access to locally and regionally grown food for schools, institutions, and consumers, and strengthen rural-urban linkages, and for other purposes.
Latest Development	Introduced on 5/17/2007. Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the Committee on Agriculture, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.
ACTION NEEDED	ENCOURAGE YOUR REPRESENTATIVES TO CO-SPONSOR THIS IMPORTANT BILL.

Background:

The rapidly changing market landscape of agriculture and the food system presents American farmers and ranchers and rural communities with many opportunities and challenges. Powerful new trends in consumer demand, information and farm technologies, population changes and development pressures, and innovative new business models across the supply chain have all contributed to the creation of new markets for agricultural products.

Entrepreneurial agriculture has great potential to improve farm income, but farmers will need the tools and skills that allow them to tap into the emerging and future trends in markets in an environment of increased competition and potentially decreasing traditional farm income support programs. Federal policies and programs have slowly begun to respond to these new market and value-adding opportunities, but there remains a significant lag and mismatch between current federal policy priorities and actual market trends.

The *Local Food and Farm Support Act* would:

- Provide \$60 million a year for Value-Added Producer Grants to help farmers and ranchers take advantage of marketing opportunities in value-added agriculture.
- Provide \$5 million a year in grants for feasibility studies and \$25 million a year in loans and loan guarantees for infrastructure and equipment to improve farmer access to processing and distribution systems.
- Provide \$25 million a year in grants to establish and promote farmer’s markets and other direct to consumer sales activities.
- Increase funding up to \$75 million for the WIC Farmer’s Market Nutrition Program.
- Increase funding up to \$75 million a year for the Senior Farmer’s Market Nutrition Program.
- Provide \$60.5 million a year for Community Food Project Competitive Grants to support projects that will increase food security in communities.
- Increase funding up to \$20 million a year for farm to school cafeteria programs.
- Allow government agencies, including schools, to use geographic preferences in their bidding and procurement programs and provide start-up grants for to help promote the purchase of local food.
- Create the Food Stamp Fruit and Vegetable Incentive Program that would assist states to provide an incentive program for food stamp recipients to purchase additional fruits and vegetables.
- Provide grants and technical assistance to promote agriculture in urban areas, particularly food insecure communities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THESE PROGRAMS, GO TO:

<http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/Final%20PolicyBackgnd%20-%20New%20Markets.pdf>