

**Sustainable Agriculture Coalition's  
FARM BILL PROGRESS REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONFERENCE**

Issue/Program and SAC Platform	House Bill	Senate Bill	SAC Conference Recommendation
<b>Beginning Farmer and Rancher (BFR)</b> SAC BFR Platform Summary			
<b>BFR Development Program</b> - strengthen and reauthorize with a minimum of \$25 million in annual mandatory funding	<b>YES</b> - reauthorized without changes, but with \$15 million annual mandatory funding	<b>PARTIAL YES</b> - strengthen and reauthorized, but with only an authorization for appropriations up to \$30 million a year rather than mandatory funding	<b>COMBINE</b> - House \$15 million annual mandatory funding, but with Senate language
<b>BFR Individual Development Accounts</b> - authorize a BFR IDA pilot program in at least 15 states at \$5 million in annual mandatory funding	<b>NO</b>	<b>PARTIAL YES</b> - authorized for appropriations of up to \$10 million annually, but no mandatory funding	<b>SENATE</b> - but with \$5 million in annual mandatory funding
<b>BFR Down Payment Loan Program</b> - improve by reducing the interest rate and down payment requirements, deferring first year payments, and increasing the maximum allowable portion of farm sales price eligible for the down payment loan from \$250,000 to \$500,000	<b>YES</b> - interest rate reduced (1% minimum); down payment requirements reduced; maximum eligible farm sales price increased; no first year deferral; FSA loan increased to 20 years	<b>YES</b> - identical to House except interest rate minimum set at 2%	<b>HOUSE</b>
<b>BFR Land Contract Program</b> - make the existing BFR Land Contract guaranteed loan pilot program permanent, strengthen to include option of payment or asset guarantee, and applied nationwide to encourage private land sales that transfer farms from retiring to new farmers	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b> - except no asset guarantee option	<b>HOUSE</b>
<b>Direct Credit Loan Limits</b> - increase the per farm loan limits for direct operating and direct ownership loans from \$200,000 to \$300,000	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>HOUSE/SENATE</b>
<b>BFR Loan Fund Set-Aside</b> - increase the percentage of total loan funding reserved for BFRs for direct ownership loans to 75%, direct operating loans to 50%, and guaranteed ownership loans to 40%	<b>YES</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>HOUSE/SENATE</b>
<b>Loan Authorization Levels</b> - increase authorization for appropriation for direct operating loans from \$565 million to \$850 million and for direct ownership loans from \$205 million to \$350 million	<b>NO</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>SENATE</b>

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<b>Term Limits and Graduation</b> - eliminate term limits on direct loans but provide for an enhanced graduation process	<b>YES &amp; NO</b> - enhanced graduation process adopted, but term limits continue	<b>YES &amp; NO</b> - enhanced graduated process adopted; permanently eliminates guaranteed loan term limits	<b>INCLUDE</b> enhanced graduation process, but eliminate term limits or at least extend to 10 years for direct; if keep term limits, keep for both direct and guaranteed
<b>Conservation Loans</b> - retain but strengthen conservation loan authorization, adding a priority for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, adding a priority for loans to help convert to sustainable or organic production systems, and eliminating the current \$50,000 conservation loan cap and substituting the underlying caps for direct and guaranteed loans	<b>YES &amp; NO</b> - BFR, SDA and sustainable and organic conversion prioritized, but direct loans are dropped (guaranteed loans only), the loan limit is raised to \$1 million, and new eligibility criteria established	<b>YES</b> - plus an EQIP provision to give priority standing to EQIP eligible producers who cannot be funded	<b>SENATE</b>
<b>Conservation Reserve Program Transition Option</b> - offer special incentive (2 years extra payment) for owners of CRP land returning to production to rent or sell to beginning farmers and ranchers who use sustainable grazing practices or resource-conserving cropping systems, or who transition to organic (5-year cost = \$16 million)	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>HOUSE</b>
<b>Conservation Funding Set Aside for BFRs and Socially Disadvantaged (SDA) Farmers</b> - reserve 10% of total funds for each farm bill conservation program for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers for the first 4 months of the program year	<b>PARTIAL YES</b> - 5% set-aside each for BFR and SDA, but only for EQIP, for first 3 months	<b>YES</b> - except repooling timing determined by USDA, and excludes farms with less than \$15,000 in sales	<b>MELD</b> - 5% set-aside for each, but include all programs, repooling date determined by USDA, drop \$15,000 test
<b>Conservation Cost-Share for Beginning and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers</b> - provide 15% bonus up to 90% cost share for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers	<b>YES</b> - but straight 90% regardless of underlying cost share rate	<b>YES</b>	<b>SENATE</b>

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<p><b>Conservation Cooperative Agreements and Special Incentives</b> - provide BFR and SDA conservation planning assistance and sustainable agriculture training through cooperative agreements; provide higher levels of technical assistance funding for BFR and SDA farmers; provide special incentives to BFR and SDA farmers for total resource managements plans under working lands conservation programs</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - current law special incentives provision continued and expanded to SDA farmers and ranchers</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - current law special incentives provision continued; higher level of TA authorized; cooperative agmts authorized for technical assistance, conservation planning, and sustainable agriculture training</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>BOTH</b></p>
<p><b>Risk Management Education Emphasis</b> - include a special emphasis on making grants for risk management for beginning, immigrant, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>YES</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>YES</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>HOUSE/SENATE</b></p>
<p><b>IFAFS Priority Mission Area</b> - include a new priority mission area for BFRs within the Initiative for Future Ag and Food Systems competitive grant program</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NO</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b> - included as part of a new rural and ag entrepreneurship priority</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SENATE</b></p>
<p><b>Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers</b> - authorize \$25 million in annual mandatory for the "Sec 2501" program, emphasizing outreach through community-based organizations</p>	<p><b>YES</b> - \$15 million annual mandatory funding</p>	<p><b>NO</b> - authorizes up to \$50 million in appropriations annually</p>	<p><b>HOUSE</b> - with meld of substantive improvements from both bills</p>
<p><b>Office of Outreach</b> - not included in original SAC platform - upgrade status of office and co-locate with 2501 program - but put BFRDP program at CSREES</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - direct USDA to relocate the Office of Outreach; co-locate with 2501 program, BFRDP, new Farmworker Coordinator, and new Coordinator for Chronically Underserved Rural Areas at Office of Outreach</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - direct USDA to relocate the Office of Outreach and co-locate with 2501 program</p>	<p><b>COMBINE</b> - Both House and Senate but locate BFRDP at CSREES as per Senate</p>
<p><b>Office of Small Farms and Beginning Farmers and Ranchers</b> - not included in original SAC platform - upgrade status of office and status of the related interagency council, including assignment to implement recent USDA Advisory Committee and recent GAO recommendations to set goals and improve data collection, coordination and program performance</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NO</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b> - provides new name, relocation, and stronger mission to the USDA Small and Beginning Farmer Office and Interagency Council, including new duties reflecting recent GAO and USDA Advisory Committee recommendations</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SENATE</b></p>

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<b>New Markets, Local Food, and Value Added</b> <u>SAC New Markets Platform Summary</u>			
<p><b>Value-Added Producer Grants Program</b> - renew and strengthen the program by: increasing from \$40 million to \$60 million in annual mandatory funding; providing a priority for projects that improve the viability of small and mid-sized farms and improve land stewardship; setting aside 10% of total funding for projects that benefit beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers; setting aside 10% for outreach and technical assistance, with priority for underserved areas; creating new grant fund categories for local food systems and for the development of food value chains that help mid-sized farms; creating simplified application for smaller grants; creating a family farm viability fund to support innovative cooperative projects</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - \$30 million mandatory a year with language giving preference to small and mid-size farms, 10% set-aside for projects benefiting beginning or minority farmers, 10% set-aside for mid-tier value chain network projects</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - No mandatory funding; 10% set aside for technical, outreach assistance and market research, including funding for local food grants and for mid-tier value chain grants; priority for funding for small and mid-sized farms and beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers; simplified application process for projects requesting less than \$50,000; funding for feasibility studies limited to \$150,000 and working capital to \$300,000; priority for technical assistance for underserved areas</p>	<p><b>COMBINE AND INCREASE FUNDING</b> - \$40 million (2002 FB level) in mandatory annual funding; 10% set aside for mid tier value chain network projects (including definition) as included in House bill; meld House and Senate language on priority for projects targeting small and mid-sized farms and BFR/SDA; Senate provisions providing technical assistance set-aside, definition, and underserved area priority; Senate provisions supporting local food systems; Senate simplified application process for projects requesting less than \$50,000; Senate provision limiting funding for feasibility studies to \$150,000</p>
<p><b>Farmers' Market Promotion Program</b> - provide a minimum of \$25 million in annual mandatory funding, including funding for electronic benefits technology; clarify that program supports the full range of direct marketing options; change name to Direct Marketing Promotion Program</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - \$35 million mandatory over 5 yrs; renamed Farmers Marketing Assistance Program and clarifies full range of marketing options; includes funding for electronic benefits technology</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - \$30 million in mandatory funding over 5 years; minor substantive changes; funding for electronic benefits technology not included in FMPP, but the nutrition title has a separate provision for EBT with \$5 million in mandatory funding over 5 years</p>	<p><b>HOUSE</b> - but neutral on location for \$5 million for EBT</p>
<p><b>Community Food Project Grants</b> - increase mandatory funding over current \$5 million annually</p>	<p><b>NO</b> - authorized for \$30 million in annual appropriated funds, but no mandatory funding</p>	<p><b>YES</b> - \$10 million annually in mandatory spending</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SENATE</b></p>

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<p><b>Interstate Shipment of State Inspected Meat</b> - allow interstate shipment of state-inspected meat if incorporated with stronger food safety and inspection guidelines, effective training and enforcement, and federal recall and plant closure authority</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - but state inspection criteria but must be identical to federal and no provision for improved regulation, training, inspection</p>	<p><b>YES</b> - limited mainly to plants with 25 or fewer employees, state inspection "at least equal to" federal standards, federal oversight of state plants, outreach and training program for small plants, cost share for inspection and testing; requires USDA audits</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SENATE</b></p>
<p><b>Local/Regional Food Enterprise Loans</b> - not included in original SAC platform - SAC recommended amending Business &amp; Industry Loan program to authorize loans for food-related enterprises serving local markets</p>	<p><b>YES</b> - loan preference under the Business and Industry Loan Program for food enterprises serving markets within 400 miles</p>	<p><b>YES</b> - loan priority and at least 5% loan volume set aside under the Business and Industry Loan Program for food processing and distribution enterprises serving markets in-state or within 300 miles; priority for underserved areas; provision for feasibility study grants for such enterprises within the VAPG program; bill also includes \$7 million in mandatory funding over 5 years for a Healthy Food Enterprise Development Center</p>	<p><b>MELD</b> - loan preference or priority; at least 5% set aside; 400 miles or in-state; Senate definitions; preference for underserved areas; feasibility studies within VAPG</p>
<p><b>Local Food Systems Study</b> - not included in original SAC platform - SAC recommended passage of Senate floor amendment</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NO</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b> - provides for case studies and report to establish a working definition of local food systems and assess key indicators including market share, gaps in processing, marketing, and distribution, and nutrition, community, energy, and environmental impacts; establishes a collaborative study team with membership from USDA, EPA, higher education institutions, farmers, and NGOs</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SENATE</b></p>

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<b>Rural Development</b> <u>SAC Rural Development Platform Summary</u>			
<b>Rural Micro-Enterprise Assistance Program</b> - authorize and fund program at \$50 million per year in mandatory funding to assist rural entrepreneurs in establishing new small businesses in rural sectors	<b>PARTIAL YES</b> - authorized as proposed, with a \$20 m a year authorization for appropriations, but no mandatory funding	<b>YES</b> - program is authorized as proposed, \$40 million a year over 5 years	<b>SENATE AND FUNDING INCREASE</b> - increase funding level to \$75 million
<b>Rural Entrepreneurship Education and Enterprise Facilitation Program</b> - create new program with mandatory annual funding of \$20 million to create and support entrepreneurial networks, provide technical training, and conduct applied research to boost entrepreneurship	<b>NO</b>	<b>PARTIAL YES</b> - included with modifications and authorization for appropriation, but no mandatory money	<b>SENATE</b>
<b>Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)</b> - create a permanent authorization	<b>YES</b> - provided with permanent authorization within Rural Business-Cooperative Service	<b>YES</b> - same as House	<b>HOUSE/SENATE</b>
<b>Conservation Security Program</b> <u>SAC CSP Platform Summary</u>			
<b>CSP Funding</b> - remove funding caps from CSP that have been used to cut the program by over \$4 billion since 2003, restore the cut and include no further cuts to baseline; increase technical assistance funding to realistic level	<b>NO</b> - \$700 million 5-year cut, \$4.8 billion 10 year cut; no program until 2012; no technical assistance fix	<b>PARTIAL YES</b> - \$2 billion in mandatory funding restored over 5 years, \$1.28 billion over 10 years; program begins again in 2008; funding sufficient for an enrollment target of 13.3 million acres a year or 80 million acres by 2013; includes technical assistance fix	<b>SENATE</b>

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<p><b>CSP Policy</b> - move to nationwide, continuous enrollment process; strengthen stewardship eligibility criteria; restore a comprehensive conservation planning component; streamline payment structure to focus on environmental outcomes; create resource-specific indices for eligibility and payment purposes; include minimum floor payment for small acreage farms; include crop diversity and organic farming system enhancement payments; include incentives for perennial, wildlife-friendly biomass production; ensure implementation of on-farm research and demonstration and on-farm monitoring and evaluation enhancements; coordinate program more closely with EQIP so EQIP can serve as a stepping stone; include coordination provision with National Organic Program certification</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - rewrites program to eliminate three tiers, eliminate all payments except for enhancement payments, and create ranking system to provide for a nationwide enrollment process; must meet criteria for at least 1 resource concern to be eligible and address all priority resource concerns during the initial contract period; \$150,000 payment cap over 5 year contract, with \$60,000 a year payment cap; resource-conserving crop rotations, managed intensive rotational grazing, and organic systems recognized in the ranking criteria; includes crosswalk b/n organic certification and CSP</p>	<p><b>YES</b> -coordinated with EQIP via a new Comprehensive Stewardship Incentives Program; nationwide, continuous enrollment and ranking system; no tiers and only enhancement payments; must meet stewardship criteria for soil and water quality to be eligible and agree to reach the criteria on at least one more resource during the initial contract period to be eligible; average contract payment per acre set at \$19; \$240,000 6-year payment cap, including \$25,000 for on-farm research and demonstration; special supplemental payment for resource-conservation crop rotations; organic crosswalk; comprehensive programmatic considerations for organic farming; minimum payment for small acreage producers</p>	<p><b>MELD</b> - no tiers; enhancement payments only; whole farm only; nationwide, continuous sign-up; coordinate with EQIP via CSIP with priority resource concern process, etc.; meet at least 1 resource concern to stewardship threshold to be eligible and address at least 3 to ST within first contract period; \$40,000 annual payment cap, including up to \$10,000 research and demonstration subcap; supplemental payment for RCC rotations; House RCC, managed grazing, organic ranking criteria; organic crosswalk; organic programmatic considerations; minimum payment provision for small acreage producer</p>
<p><b>Conservation Title</b> <u>SAC Conservation Title Platform Summary</u></p>			
<p><b>Cooperative Conservation Partnerships</b> - reauthorize the current Partnership and Cooperation Initiative as the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative, 90% of total funding for projects decided on at the state level, programmatic flexibility, include competitive ranking criteria, include special support for projects that simultaneously address specific local natural resource concerns and community development opportunities</p>	<p><b>YES</b> - reauthorized as the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative, 90% at state level, repool April 1, includes preference for projects serving both community development and environmental needs; includes programmatic flexibility; includes bonus payment for restorations as community development assets or public access; reserves 10% of total funding for CCPI, however restricts program to CSP, EQIP, and WHIP (but not CRP, WRP, FRPP, GRP)</p>	<p><b>YES</b> - reauthorized as "Partnerships and Cooperation" with funding drawn from all conservation programs; includes programmatic flexibility; does not include community development goals; in Senate bill P&amp;C also incorporates the Regional Water Enhancement Program; funding for combined program set at 10% of total allocation for the programs, with 75% to be determined at the state level and 25% designated for multi-state projects; repool April 1</p>	<p><b>MELD</b> - CCPI, with all programs included, 10% of total funding, 90% at state level, repool April 1, programmatic flexibility, include community development goals and bonus payment provision, House evaluation criteria with some tweaks; neutral on inclusion of RWEPP within this provision</p>

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<p><b>Environmental Quality Incentives Program</b> - restore provisions that ensure overall environmental effects are positive, including progressive planning and a \$150,000 payment limitation; restore prohibition of funding for animal waste storage and handling facilities for large-scale CAFO's; restore cost effectiveness criteria; greater emphasis on land management practices and on encouraging higher levels of management; include state performance incentive; restore the educational assistance component of the program; coordinate with CSP so EQIP funds are available to help producers raise environmental management levels high enough to become eligible for CSP</p>	<p><b>MOSTLY NO</b> - \$1.9 B increase over 5, \$5.4 B increase over 10; payment cap of \$60,000 year or \$125,000 a year if in more than one conservation program, or \$300,000/\$625,000 over 5 years; no CAFO reform; cost-effectiveness language restored; water conservation/in stream flow language; priority for single practices under an EMS; air quality carve out within Conservation Innovation Grants section; organic and specialty crop outreach funded at \$5 million a year; \$5 million a year for conservation planning pilot program</p>	<p><b>MOSTLY NO</b> - level funding at \$1.3 billion a year; \$450,000 payment cap retained; no CAFO reforms; progressive planning encouraged with payment; cost effectiveness language restored; good water conservation/instream flow language; air quality priority but no carve out; contains our organic conversion assistance subprogram (see below)</p>	<p><b>MELD</b> - \$150,000 payment cap over 5 years, and/or return to 1996 FB annual/multiyear language; cost-effectiveness language; water conservation/instream flow language including House consumptive use language; include but improve Senate planning payment; House priorities and groupings of application language; delete House single practice EMS provision; Senate air quality; Senate organic conversion but with House 50% technical assistance provision</p>
<p><b>Conservation Compliance</b> - re-link existing conservation compliance regime to crop insurance program; expand to cover all cropland eroding at unsustainable rates; strengthen waiver guidelines and remove county committees from waiver process; remove graduated penalties for unmitigated swampbuster violations</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>NO</b></p>	<p><b>MOSTLY NO</b> - with the exception of improvements to good faith review and waiver guidelines; second tier review with FSA State Director and concurrence of State Conservationist</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SENATE PLUS</b> further improvements</p>
<p><b>Sodsaver</b> - enact a sodsaver provision prohibiting commodity, crop insurance, and conservation subsidies on all native prairie and permanent grasslands converted to cropping</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - prohibits crop insurance subsidies for the first four years following grassland conversion</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - prohibits crop insurance subsidies permanently; includes a 5 acre de minimus provision; reporting requirements</p>	<p><b>SENATE PLUS</b> - add commodity and conservation payments</p>
<p><b>Wetlands Reserve Program</b> - replenish funding with enrollment directive of at least 250,000 acres per year nationwide with a priority for permanent easements; provide incentives for landowners to allow public access to the land as part of community development plans for public recreational amenities</p>	<p><b>YES</b> - restores funding with total authorization of 3.6 million acres; directive to enroll 250,000 acres annually; no funding in outyears; includes new subprogram (up to 10% of total) for floodplain land; improves appraisal process; authorizes WREP</p>	<p><b>YES</b> - restores funding with directive to enroll 250,000 acres annually, but no funding in outyears; authorizes enrollment of riparian areas; improves the WRP appraisal process; authorizes WREP</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SENATE</b></p>
<p><b>BFR and SDA Conservation Issues</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">see BFR section above</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">see BFR section above</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">see BFR section above</p>

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<p><b>Conservation Reserve Program</b> - improve environmental benefits index by including greater weight for below cost bids; at least 7 million acres, or 20% of total CRP acreage should be reserved for enrollments through CCRP or CREP; include new option for voluntary long-term and permanent conservation easements on particularly environmentally sensitive land; provide landowners leaving CRP with access to transition options including CCRP, CSP, organic transition, and transfers to beginning farmers and ranchers</p>	<p><b>MOSTLY NO</b> - with the exception of the BFR transition option (see BFR section above)</p>	<p><b>NO</b></p>	<p><b>HOUSE</b> BFR transition option</p>
<p><b>Conservation Monitoring and Evaluation</b> - reauthorize the Resource Conservation Act; include iterative process of developing and tracking specific indicators; coordinate with CEAP; fund a monitoring and evaluation program as percent of total farm bill conservation mandatory spending</p>	<p><b>NO</b></p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - RCA reauthorized and strengthened, with regular appraisals and reports at 5 year intervals</p>	<p><b>SENATE</b></p>
<p><b>State Technical Committees</b> - make Local Work Groups subgroups of STC and exempt from FACA, include farmers and NGOs; increase accountability requirements for STCs</p>	<p><b>NO</b> - The State Technical Committee and subcommittees exempt from FACA</p>	<p><b>YES</b> - State Technical Committee and Local Working Groups exempt from FACA; Secretary to establish minimum standard operating procedures</p>	<p><b>BOTH</b></p>
<p><b>Pollinator Protection</b> - establish priorities in USDA conservation programs for native and domestic pollinator habitat conservation and establishment and conservation practices that protect native and managed pollinators</p>	<p><b>YES</b> - requires that USDA give priority and provide incentives for (1) increasing habitat for native and managed pollinators, especially native habitat; and (2) establishing cropping systems, integrated pest management regimes, and other practices to protect native and managed pollinators</p>	<p><b>YES</b> - adds "pollinator" enhancement to EQIP purposes; "native and managed pollinators" to resource needs that Secretary shall consider in reviewing conservation practice standards' and "managed pollinators" to the definition of livestock in CSP</p>	<p><b>BOTH</b></p>
<p><b>Prohibition on Pesticide Discrimination</b> - issue emerged during farm bill debate - SAC opposed House provision</p>	<p>prohibits USDA from establishing priorities and evaluation criteria for the approval of plans, contracts, and agreements under the farm bill Conservation Title that discriminate against the use of specific registered pesticide products or classes of pesticide products</p>	<p><b>NO</b></p>	<p><b>REMOVE HOUSE PROVISION</b></p>

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<b>Organic Provisions</b> <u>SAC Organic Issues Platform Summary</u>			
<b>Organic Research and Extension Initiative</b> - see Research and Extension section below	<i>see R&amp;E section below</i>	<i>see R&amp;E section below</i>	<i>see R&amp;E section below</i>
<b>Organic Conversion Assistance Program</b> - create an Organic Conversion Assistance Program (through the NRCS) to provide technical and financial assistance for adoption of organic farming based conservation systems with annual funding of \$50 million, at least half of which would be used for technical assistance, and capping financial assistance payments at \$10,000 a yr.	<b>PARTIAL YES</b> - new program authorized for appropriations, but no mandatory funding; \$10,000 cap a year; \$50/acre crop and \$25/acre grass max; 50% to technical and educational assistance	<b>PARTIAL YES</b> - incorporated into Environmental Quality Incentives Program, up to \$20,000 per year or total cap of \$80,000 and a period of not more than 4 years; includes technical and educational assistance, but does not specify 50% of funding; separate section of title includes TA provisions for organic and specialty crops	<b>MELD</b> - authorize within EQIP using SENATE language but with the addition of the House provision designating 50% of funding for technical and educational assistance
<b>Crop Insurance</b> - eliminate the 5% surcharge on premiums for organic producers and establish a deadline for providing payments to organic producers that reflect organic market prices rather than conventional prices	<b>PARTIAL YES</b> - creates a multi-year process that might allow for surcharge elimination (places burden of proof on producers instead of USDA); requires development and implementation of procedures for paying out based on organic market prices; requires annual progress report	<b>YES</b> - eliminates 5% surcharge unless it can be proven warranted on a crop by crop basis; requires development and implementation of procedures for paying out based on organic market prices, starting in 2009 for crops with adequate data	<b>SENATE</b> - but with an annual progress report
<b>National Organic Certification Cost Share Program</b> - establish on a nationwide basis with mandatory funding of \$25 million over 5 years, while increasing the maximum amount to \$750 per farm per year	<b>YES</b> - \$22 m mandatory over 5 yrs; increases maximum amount to \$750 per farm per year	<b>YES</b> - Same as House, but adds state and federal record-keeping requirements	<b>HOUSE/SENATE</b> - but with Senate record-keeping language included
<b>Organic Data Collection</b> - reauthorize the Organic Production and Marketing Data Initiative with specific requirements to speed up progress on comprehensive data collection in the organic sector	<b>YES</b> - with \$3 million in mandatory funding over 5 years; requires implementation report	<b>YES</b> - with \$5 million in mandatory funding over 5 years; includes detailed directives for the program	<b>SENATE</b> - but with House requirement for implementation report

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<b>Competition Title</b> <u>SAC Competition Title Platform Summary</u>			
<b>Ban on Packer Ownership of Livestock</b> - prohibit packer ownership of livestock used to manipulate prices to detriment of producers	NO	YES	SENATE
<b>Rulemaking on Unreasonable Preference Price Discrimination</b> - require USDA to write regulations defining "unreasonable preference or advantage"	NO	YES	SENATE
<b>Anti-Competitive Injury</b> - clarify congressional intent that producers need not prove an anti-competitive injury to entire market in cases involving trade practices which have harmed them individually	NO	NO	INCLUDE
<b>Full Poultry Enforcement</b> - provide full PSA enforcement powers for all types of poultry	NO	YES	SENATE
<b>Prohibit Mandatory Arbitration</b> - prohibit the use of binding mandatory arbitration clauses and restrictions on other legal rights available to producers involved in contract disputes	NO - directive to USDA to establish regulations governing arbitration in livestock and poultry production contracts and permitting producers to take small claims to small claims court if the court has jurisdiction over the claim	YES	SENATE
<b>Good Faith Bargaining</b> - make it unlawful for any firm to refuse to deal in good faith with a producer for belonging to a producer association or cooperative	NO	YES	SENATE
<b>Confidentiality</b> - expand the prohibition on confidentiality clauses that restrict farmers' rights	NO	YES	SENATE

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Issue/Program and SAC Platform	House Bill	Senate Bill	SAC Conference Recommendation
<p><b>Risk Disclosure, Contract Cancellation, and Investment Recapture</b> - require clear disclosure of producer risk; prohibit premature cancellation of contracts without a showing of good cause; prohibit forced additional investments not included in the contract, or require investment recapture by the producer</p>	<p><b>NO</b></p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - restrictions on cancellation of contracts by contractors for producers with investment of more than \$100,000, but weakened by "detrimental reliance" provision and exception due to potential jeopardy of the wellbeing of the livestock or poultry; prohibition on forced additional capital investments, but weakened by inclusion of an exception if the contractor decides the well-being of the livestock or poultry subject to the contract would be in jeopardy</p>	<p><b>SENATE PLUS</b> - remove language that weakens rights of contract producers to cancel contracts and that weakens prohibition on contractor imposing on producer additional investment requirements not included in the contract</p>
<p><b>Office of Special Counsel</b> - create Office of Special Counsel for Competition and Market Access at USDA to investigate and prosecute violations of competition and fair practice laws</p>	<p><b>NO</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b></p>	<p><b>SENATE</b></p>
<p><b>Country of Origin Labeling</b> - allow mandatory country of origin labeling to go into effect</p>	<p><b>YES</b> - mandatory country of origin labeling to go into effect by Sept. 30, 2008, with multi-country labels where applicable</p>	<p><b>YES</b> - same as House Bill but adds poultry</p>	<p><b>SENATE</b></p>
<p><b>Interstate Shipment of Meat</b> - see New Markets section above</p>	<p>see New Markets section above</p>	<p>see new Markets Section above</p>	<p>see New Markets section above</p>

**Sustainable Agriculture Coalition's  
FARM BILL PROGRESS REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONFERENCE**

Issue/Program and SAC Platform	House Bill	Senate Bill	SAC Conference Recommendation
<b>Sustainable and Organic Research</b> <u>SAC Research Title Platform Summary</u>			
<b>Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems</b> - retain the current annual mandatory funding of \$200 million a year (and add funding for 2008-9) for outcome-based interdisciplinary research, education, and extension; continue priorities on small and mid-sized farm viability, rural community development, and agro-ecosystems; add 6 new IFAFS mission areas	<b>PARTIAL YES</b> - mandatory funding transferred to and merged with National Research Initiative, with 40% of total NRI appropriated and IFAFS mandatory funds to go to IFAFS; all current IFAFS purposes maintained; no new IFAFS purposes added except for plant breeding (see below)	<b>PARTIAL YES</b> - Mandatory funding eliminated; authorized for appropriations of \$200 million each year; IFAFS and NRI melded; the 4 current IFAFS purposes SAC recommended are retained, and 3 of our 6 proposed new mission areas added -- sustainable energy, eco-services and outcome-based conservation, and rural and ag entrepreneurship, including BFRs	<b>FUND AND MELD</b> - retain mandatory funding, and redistribute to also cover 2009; include Senate mission area language additions; if melded with NRI, ensure that no less than 30% of total (mandatory plus appropriated) annually is used for IFAFS and that 40% NRI mission linked requirement is maintained
<b>BFR Development Program</b>	<i>see Beginning Farmer section above</i>	<i>see Beginning Farmer section above</i>	<i>see Beginning Farmer section above</i>
<b>Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative</b> - increase funding for OREI from \$3 million to a minimum of \$15 million in annual mandatory funds	<b>PARTIAL YES</b> - \$5 million annual mandatory funding, with additional authorization for appropriations of up to \$25 million a year; adds 2 new research purposes for environmental outcomes and improved seed varieties	<b>YES</b> - \$16 million annual mandatory funding	<b>SENATE</b> funding level with House language changes
<b>Organic - Agricultural Research Service</b> - create within the ARS a National Program for Organic Agriculture with funding of at least \$25 million a year	<b>PARTIAL YES</b> - Sense of Congress that ARS provide organic with "fair share" language included	<b>PARTIAL YES</b> - similar to House	<b>MELD</b>
<b>National Genetic Resource Program</b> - reauthorize and increase funding to improve public plant and animal breeding programs that focus on crops and breeds critical to sustainable and organic systems	<b>PARTIAL YES</b> - reauthorized but without changes or additional funding	<b>YES</b> - reauthorized with the new plant and animal breeding language; no specified funding	<b>SENATE</b>
<b>Plant and Animal Breeding - National Research Initiative</b> - create a national program within NRI for classical plant and animal breeding	<b>YES</b> - but added to IFAFS instead of NRI	<b>YES</b> - added to NRI	<b>SENATE</b>
<b>Pollinator Research</b> - establish priorities for native and managed pollinator research in USDA research programs	<b>YES</b> - authorizes appropriations for research, with a priority for honey bee and native bee research, with an annual reporting requirement	<b>YES</b> - authorizes inclusion of colony collapse disorder and pollinator research as high priorities in competitive REE programs	<b>COMBINE</b>

**Sustainable Agriculture Coalition's  
FARM BILL PROGRESS REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONFERENCE**

Issue/Program and SAC Platform	House Bill	Senate Bill	SAC Conference Recommendation
<p><b>Specialty Crop Research Initiative - Sustainable and Organic Provisions</b> - not in original SAC platform - maximize focus on research that improves environmental sustainability of specialty crop production</p>	<p><b>NO</b> -creates new competitive grant program, \$215 million mandatory 5-year funding plus additional authorization for appropriations of up to \$100 million a year, but no organic or sustainability provisions</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - similar to House but at \$80 million mandatory 5-year spending and adds research on organic specialty crop production, improving crop characteristics related to nutrient uptake efficiency and resilience to pests and diseases, and improving sustainability</p>	<p>include <b>SENATE</b> language, though additional improvements would be welcome</p>
<p><b>Research Grants for Antibiotic Resistance</b> - not included in original SAC platform - SAC supported Senate floor amendment</p>	<p><b>NO</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b> - creates a competitive grant program to study the development of antibiotic-resistant bacteria in livestock and ensure the judicious use of antibiotics in livestock; projects may include prevention of antibiotics into groundwater, alternatives to antibiotic use, development of better veterinary diagnostics and farm management practices, etc.</p>	<p><b>SENATE</b></p>
<p><b>Cloning</b> - not included in original SAC platform - SAC supported Senate floor amendment</p>	<p><b>NO</b></p>	<p>requires additional study and review by USDA, FDA, and NAS of health and economic impact of products from cloned animals prior to a final FDA decision on safety of cloned animals/animal products</p>	<p><b>SENATE</b></p>
<p><b>Energy</b> <u>SAC Renewable Energy Platform Summary</u></p>			
<p><b>Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Program</b> reauthorize with priorities for projects focusing on energy efficiency for small and mid-sized producers and projects that enable agricultural producers to implement projects with a net environmental benefit; add sustainability criteria; expand funding; allow feasibility grants</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - \$500 m over life of FB, reaching \$150 m a year in 2012; includes a carve-out for grants of \$50,000 or less; allows for feasibility studies; renamed REAP</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - reauthorized with \$230 million in mandatory funding over 5 years; carve outs for grants of \$20,000 or less; allows for feasibility grants; "merit" criteria for grants with environmental and public health benefits as well as energy benefits; renamed REAP</p>	<p><b>SENATE</b></p>

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<p><b>Bioenergy Crop Transition Assistance Program</b> - establish a nationwide program to determine the ecological and economic feasibility of producing energy from a new array of feedstock crops; encourage the development of agricultural energy that responds to regional needs and capabilities with an emphasis placed on converting existing cropland to biomass production</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - Biomass Energy Reserve included with \$75 million in mandatory funding over 5 years, with payments to farmers growing cellulosic biomass for use as an energy feedstock for bioenergy production facilities</p>	<p><b>YES</b> - Bioenergy Crop Transition Assistance included, part of larger program with \$130 million mandatory funding over 5 years; projects/payments for bioenergy crops, focus on perennials, planning grants, selection criteria including local economic impact and beginning and minority farmer participation, and some conservation requirements. Funding shared with annual crop of renewable biomass program and program for removing crop residue and other biomass, neither of which has adequate conservation measures.</p>	<p><b>MELD</b> - Senate language for Bioenergy Crop Transition Assistance Program (perennials) with eligible land definitions from House. Delete Senate provision for annual crop program or make it subject to additional conservation safeguards or add funding limitations to ensure that adequate funding is available for perennial bioenergy crops. Incorporate conservation and environmental safeguards to the program for collection, harvest, storage and transport of renewable biomass.</p>
<p><b>Commodity Program Reform</b> SAC Commodity Title Platform Summary</p>			
<p><b>Effective Payment Limitations</b> - enact comprehensive, effective payment reform, close loopholes; hard cap, including gains from certificates and forfeitures, at \$250,000 per farm per year; all payments should be attributed to real persons and available only to those actively engaged in farm labor and management</p>	<p><b>NO</b> - \$40,000 increase in limit on direct payments; no reform of actively engaged rules; no limit at all on marketing loan benefits</p>	<p><b>NO</b> - similar to House except it includes a \$10,000 reduction in CCP cap, does not include the \$40,000 increase in directs</p>	<p><b>REAL REFORM</b> - reform actively engaged rules per Dorgan-Grassley amendment; include D-G primary control provision; do not increase direct payment limit; cap marketing loan benefits</p>
<p><b>Sodsaver</b> - see Conservation section above</p>	<p>see Conservation section above</p>	<p>see Conservation section above</p>	<p>see Conservation section above</p>
<p><b>Crop Insurance</b></p>			
<p><b>Risk Management Research, Education, and Outreach Grants</b> - not included in original SAC platform, but SAC opposes cuts in funding to Outreach Partnerships, Commodity Partnerships, and RMA and CSREES RM Partnerships</p>	<p><b>NO</b> - reduces current \$50m a year in mandatory spending for a variety of risk management programs by \$20m w/out specifying which programs take the cut - would likely reduce funding for SAC supported programs</p>	<p><b>PARTIAL YES</b> - also reduces mandatory spending by \$20m a year, with \$7.5m from new insurance product R&amp;D and \$12.5m from R&amp;D and partnerships for underserved states and commodities</p>	<p><b>SENATE</b> - but exempt Sec. 522(d) commodity partnerships from spending reduction</p>
<p><b>AGR-Lite Eligibility for Contract Growers</b> - not included in original SAC platform</p>	<p><b>NO</b></p>	<p><b>YES</b> - allows contract growers to qualify for enrollment in AGR-Lite risk protection program</p>	<p><b>SENATE</b></p>
<p><b>Organic Crop Insurance</b> - see Organic section</p>	<p>see Organic section above</p>	<p>see Organic section above</p>	<p>see Organic section above</p>