

Farm Bill Issue	House Committee Bill	SAC Position
<b>Beginning Farmer and Rancher Initiative</b>		
Background Information: <a href="http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/PolicyBackgnd-BeginningFarmerInitiative.pdf">http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/PolicyBackgnd-BeginningFarmerInitiative.pdf</a>		
Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program	YES - reauthorized with \$15 m mandatory a year	reauthorize with a minimum of \$25 million in annual mandatory funding
Beginning Farmer and Rancher Individual Development Account	NO- program not included in bill	fund IDA pilot program at \$5 million per year for five years and establish in at least 15 states
Beginning Farmer and Rancher Down Payment Loan	YES- loan rates reduced, down payment requirements reduced, maximum allowable portion of farm sales price eligible for down payment loan increased	improve by reducing loan rates 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
Beginning Farmer Land Contract Pilot Program	YES - program improved and expanded to nationwide	make the existing Land Contract guaranteed loan pilot program permanent, strengthened, and applied nationwide to encourage private land sales that transfer farms from retiring farmers to new farmers
Direct Credit Loan Limits	YES - direct operating and direct ownership loans increased from \$200,000 to \$300,000	increase the per farm loan limits for direct operating and direct ownership loans from \$200,000 to \$300,000

Beginning Farmer and Rancher Loan Fund Reservations	YES- beginning farmer and rancher loan fund reservations increased	increase direct ownership loan reservation to 75% of the total, direct operating loan reservation to 50% of the total, and guaranteed ownership loan reservation to 40% of total
Loan Authorization Levels	NO- does not increase authorizations	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
Term Limits and Graduation	YES & NO - enhanced graduation process is adopted, but term limits on direct loans continue	eliminate term limits provided an enhanced graduation process is adopted
Conservation Loans	YES & NO - priority for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers and for those converting to sustainable or organic production systems included, but direct loans are dropped (guaranteed loans only) and loan limit raised to \$1 million	retain conservation loan authorization and strengthen by adding a priority for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers as well as a priority for using the loan to help convert to sustainable or organic production systems. The current \$50,000 cap on the size of conservation loans is eliminated.
Conservation Reserve Program Farm Transition Option	YES - offers incentives to owners of CRP land returning to production to rent or sell to BFR using sustainable practices	offer special incentives for owners of CRP land returning to production to rent or sell to beginning farmers and ranchers who use sustainable grazing practices or fully compliant conservation cropping systems, or who transition to organic

Conservation Funding Set-Asides for Beginning and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers	YES - 5 percent of total funds set-aside for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers, but only for EQIP	reserve 10 percent of total funds for each farm bill conservation program for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers for the first four months of the program year
Conservation Cost-Share Bonus for Beginning and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers	YES - provides bonus at 90% cost share for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers	provide 15% bonus up to 90% cost share for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers
Beginning Farmer and Rancher Risk Management Education Emphasis	YES - includes emphasis on grants for risk management for beginning, immigrant, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers	include a special emphasis on making grants for risk management for beginning, immigrant, and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers
<b>New Markets, Local Food, and Value Added</b>		
Background Information: <a href="http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/PolicyBackgnd-NewMarkets.pdf">http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/PolicyBackgnd-NewMarkets.pdf</a>		

Value-Added Producer Grants	PARTIAL YES - \$30 m mandatory a year with language giving preference to small and mid-size farms and providing funding for mid-tier value chain networks	provide \$60 million in annual mandatory funding; priority for projects that improve the viability of small and mid-sized farms and improve land stewardship; set-aside 10% of total funding for projects that benefit beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers; set-aside 10% for outreach and technical assistance; create new grant fund categories for local food systems and for the development of food value chains that help mid-sized farms; create a family farm viability fund to support innovative cooperative projects
Farmers' Market Promotion Program	PARTIAL YES - \$35 m mandatory over 5 yrs; renamed Farmers Marketing Assistance Program and clarifies full range of marketing options; includes funding for electronic benefits technology	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
Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program	YES - \$15 m mandatory a year	increase mandatory farm bill funding
Community Food Project Grants	NO - authorized for \$30 million in annual appropriated funds (current funding was \$5 million annual in mandatory funds) but no farm bill funding	increase mandatory farm bill funding
Local/Regional Food Enterprise Loans	YES - loan preference under the Business and Industry Loan Program for food enterprises serving markets within 400 miles	n/a

<b>Conservation Security Program</b>		
Background Information: <a href="http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/PolicyBackgnd-CSP.pdf">http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/PolicyBackgnd-CSP.pdf</a>		
Conservation Security Program	NO - \$3.2 B cut over 10 yrs; no signup until 2012; rewrites program to eliminate three tiers and eliminates all payments except for enhancement payments and creates ranking system to provide for a nationwide enrollment process; Walz amendment passed with RCC Rotations, MIG, and organic systems in the ranking criteria, plus crosswalk b/n NOP and CSP; Gillibrand amendment to increase funding and restart program in 2010 included in the en bloc amendment, but dies there with no offset	remove funding caps from CSP that have been used to cut the program by over \$4 billion since 2003 and increase program funding; move to nationwide, continuous enrollment process; strengthen stewardship eligibility criteria; restore a comprehensive conservation planning component; streamline payment structure to focus on environmental outcomes
<b>Conservation Title</b>		
Background Information: <a href="http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/PolicyBackgnd-ConservationTitle.pdf">http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/PolicyBackgnd-ConservationTitle.pdf</a>		
Cooperative Conservation Partnerships	YES - reauthorized as the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative, 90% at state level, includes preference for projects serving both community development and environmental needs; though funding may only be drawn from CSP, EQIP, and WHIP (as opposed to also including WRP, FRPP, and GRP)	reauthorize the current Partnership and Cooperation Initiative as the Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative, 90% at state level, programmatic flexibility, and include special support for projects in which multiple producers address specific local natural resource concerns and community development opportunities in partnership with other entities

<p>Environmental Quality Incentives Program</p>	<p>NO - \$2.2 B increase over 5, \$5 plus B increase over 10; no real payment limit reform; no CAFO reform; cost-effectiveness restored; negative provisions added in markup include instream flow eliminated from forest management practices outcomes, air quality carve out, state performance incentive dropped</p>	<p>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; restore the educational assistance component of the program</p>
<p>Conservation Compliance</p>	<p>NO- bill does not include any SAC proposals for strengthening conservation compliance</p>	<p>re-link existing conservation compliance regime to crop insurance program and expand to cover all cropland eroding at unsustainable rates and strengthen waiver guidelines; remove graduated penalties for swampbuster violations that are not mitigated</p>
<p>Sodsaver</p>	<p>NO - only included a partial sodsaver provision prohibiting crop insurance subsidies for the first four years following grassland conversion (but does not prohibit commodity or conservation payments)</p>	<p>enact a sodsaver provision prohibiting commodity, crop insurance, and conservation subsidies on all native prairie and permanent grasslands converted to cropping</p>
<p>Wetlands Reserve Program</p>	<p>YES - restores funding with total authorization of 3.61 million acres; directive to enroll 250,000 acres annually</p>	<p>replenish funding with enrollment directive of at least 250,000 acres per year nationwide with a priority for permanent easements; additionally, incentives for landowners to allow public access to the land as part of community development plans for public recreational amenities</p>

Conservation Reserve Program	NO - none of SAC objectives included other than BFR transition (see above); Rep. Moran (R-KS) amendment approved allowing dryland cropping on CRP land, opposed by SAC	retain as the major land retirement program with improvements to the environmental benefits index 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; voluntary long-term and permanent conservation easements on particularly environmentally sensitive land should be introduced as a new option; and landowners leaving CRP should have access to transition options including CCRP, CSP, organic transition, and transfers to beginning farmers and ranchers
Sustainable Agriculture Energy Innovation Grants Program	NO - program not included in bill	establish a nationwide program to determine the ecological and economic feasibility of producing energy from a new array of feedstock crops; the program would encourage the development of agricultural energy that responds to regional needs and capabilities with an emphasis placed on converting existing cropland to biomass production
<b>Organic Provisions</b>		
Background Information: <a href="http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/PolicyBackgnd-OrganicProvisions.pdf">http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/PolicyBackgnd-OrganicProvisions.pdf</a>		

National Organic Certification Cost Share Program	YES - \$22 m mandatory over 5 yrs; increases maximum amount to \$750 per farm per year	establish on a nationwide basis with mandatory funding of at least \$25 million, while increasing the maximum amount to \$750 per farm per year
Organic Conversion Assistance Program	YES but not funded - 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	create an Organic Conversion 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
Crop Insurance	YES - but weak and delayed- creates a multi-year process that might allow for surcharge elimination (places burden of proof on producers instead of USDA)	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>Competition Title</b>		

Background Information: <http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/PolicyBackgnd-CompetitionTitle.pdf>

The Packers and Stockyards Act	NO- issues not addressed	amend to prohibit packer ownership of livestock used to manipulate prices to the detriment of producers; require USDA to write regulations defining "unreasonable preference or advantage" and to establish that producers do not need to prove an anti-competitive injury to an entire market in cases involving trade practices which have harmed them individually
The Agricultural Fair Practices Act	NO - and prohibition on mandatory arbitration, which was adopted by the subcommittee, was struck in full committee by 26-17 vote, with the support of the full committee chairman	amend to make it unlawful for any firm to refuse to deal with a producer for belonging to a producer association or cooperative; prohibit the use of binding mandatory arbitration clauses and restrictions on other legal rights available to producers involved in contract disputes; expand the prohibition on confidentiality clauses; and prohibit premature cancellation of contracts without a showing of good cause
Country of Origin Labeling	YES- mandatory country of origin labeling to go into effect by Sept. 30, 2008	allow mandatory country of origin labeling to go into effect

Interstate Shipment of Meat	UNCLEAR - language included to requires USDA to report to Congress the effectiveness of state inspection programs and the changes that need to be made and to require state program requirements to be identical to federal requirements in order to get federal approval to move meat and poultry in commerce; negotiations continuing between meat industry and state departments of agriculture	allow interstate shipment of state inspected meat in return for strenghtened federal food safety regulations including plant closure authority
<b>Rural Development</b>		

Background Information: <http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/PolicyBackgnd-RuralDevelopment.pdf>

Rural Entrepreneurs and Micro-Enterprise Program	YES but not funded - the program is authorized as proposed, with a \$20 m a year authorization for appropriations, but no farm bill funding	authorize and fund program at \$50 million per year in mandatory funding to assist rural entrepreneurs in establishing new small businesses in rural sectors
Community-based Entrepreneurial Development Program	NO - program not included in the bill	create \$75 million per year program with mandatory funding to offer grants to establish regional initiatives for entrepreneurial development
Rural Entrepreneurship Education and Enterprise Facilitation Program	NO - program not included in the bill	create new program with mandatory annual funding of \$20 million to provide resources and services to rural areas
Appropriate Technology Transfer for Rural Areas (ATTRA)	YES - provided with permanent authorization within Rural Development	create permanent authorization for ATTRA

<b>Sustainable and Organic Research</b>		
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Background Information: <http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/PolicyBackgnd-Research.pdf>

Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems	YES & NO - IFAFS purposes maintained, but funding transferred to and merged with National Research Initiative, with 40% of total NRI appropriated and IFAFS mandatory funds to go to IFAFS	retain the current annual mandatory funding of \$200 million a year for outcome-based interdisciplinary research, education, and extension, and continue priorities on small and mid-sized farm viability, rural community development, and agro-ecosystems
Organic Farming Research and Extension Initiative	PARTIAL YES - \$5 m a year mandatory in addition to \$25 m authorized annual appropriations	increase funding for the Organic Research and Extension Initiative to a minimum of \$15 million in annual mandatory funds
Agricultural Research Service	PARTIAL YES - Sense of Congress "fair share" language approved	create within the ARS a National Program for Organic Agriculture with funding of at least \$25 million
Organic Production and Marketing Data Collection	YES - with \$3 m mandatory over 5 years	reauthorize the Organic Production and Marketing Data Initiative with specific requirements to ensure continuation and progress of comprehensive data collection in the organic sector
National Genetic Resource Program	PARTIAL YES - reauthorized but without changes or additional funding	reauthorize and increase funding to improve public plant and animal breeding programs that focus on crops and breeds critical to sustainable and organic systems
National Research Initiative	YES - but added to IFAFS instead of NRI	create a national program within National Research Initiative for classical plant and animal breeding

Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers	YES - \$15 m a year mandatory farm bill funding; problematic 25% match added, however	authorize \$25 million in annual mandatory emphasizing outreach through community-based organizations
<b>Renewable Energy</b>		

Background Information: <http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/PolicyBackgndRenewableEnergy.pdf>

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Program	PARTIAL YES - \$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	reauthorize with priorities for projects focusing on energy efficiency for small and mid-sized producers and projects that enable agricultural producers to implement techniques that provide a net environmental benefit; add sustainability criteria; expand funding; allow feasibility grants
Biomass Energy Transition Reserve Program	Peterson proposal included in en bloc containing incentives and payments to farmers growing cellulosic biomass for use as an energy feedstock for bioenergy production facilities	see Sustainable Agriculture Energy Innovation Grants above
<b>Commodity Payments Reform</b>		

Background Information: <http://www.sustainableagriculturecoalition.org/farmbill/PolicyBackgnd-CommodityReform.pdf>

Effective Payment Limitations	NO - \$40,000 increase in limit on direct payments; no reform of actively engaged rules; no limit at all on marketing loan benefits; \$2 m AGI test per married couple; claims to save \$226 m over next 5 years	enact effective payment reform, close loopholes that currently provide incentives to overproduction and land consolidation; total payments, including gains from commodity certificates and forfeitures , should be capped 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
Sodsaver	see above	see above
Other Commodity Reforms	NO- bill contains no real commodity reforms	expand planting flexibility and eliminate or reduce harmful impacts of marketing loan gains and loan deficiency payments on U.S. agriculture, the environment , and farm and food systems around the world