

2024 FARM BILL

PRIORITIES FOR STATE DEPARTMENTS OF AGRICULTURE

The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture will direct its policy advocacy efforts regarding the bill toward 10 specific policy areas. The next farm bill must remain unified, securing a commitment to American agriculture and the critical food and nutritional assistance programs for those who need it most.

AGRICULTURE RESEARCH

NASDA recommends significantly increasing funding for research on the safety and security of our food system and the improvement and protection of our natural resources. Robust support for agricultural research including funding for extension programs and research infrastructure is vital to ensuring U.S. agriculture remains competitive globally.

ANIMAL DISEASE

NASDA endorses the three-tiered animal disease prevention and management method established by the 2018 Farm Bill. The comprehensive program includes three critical components to identifying, addressing and responding to diseases:

- Early disease detection and surveillance
- Prevention
- Rapid response

NASDA recommends building upon the three-tiered program and ensuring the National Animal Vaccine and Veterinary Countermeasures Bank has adequate funds to increase available resources for the livestock industry. NASDA supports building an early disease detection warning system to support coordination between intergovernmental agencies and industry for a One Health approach in preparing and responding to new disease outbreaks.

CONSERVATION AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

- USDA conservation programs are effective tools in helping farmers and ranchers implement and maintain conservation practices. NASDA recommends increased funding for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program.

Environmental Quality Incentive Program

- NASDA supports increasing the total funding amount for the Environmental Quality Incentive Program and the program's federal matching contribution percentage.

Climate Initiatives

- NASDA recommends creating additional investments in research, incentive programs for voluntary practices and technical assistance resources that equip more farmers and ranchers with additional options to protect and conserve natural resources through farming practices.
- NASDA supports compensating farmers and ranchers already using climate-smart strategies to reduce emissions, sequester carbon and improve resiliency.

Water Quality

- NASDA encourages Congress to create incentives for state and local governments to invest in outcome-based water quality programs.

CYBER SECURITY

NASDA supports maintaining the Comprehensive Food Safety Training Network at the authorized level of \$20 million a year. Cyberattacks pose risks of serious harm to agricultural businesses including financial losses, loss of confidential business information and intellectual property and disruptions to our nation's food supply.

FOOD SAFETY

The Food Safety Modernization Act overhauled American food safety regulation from response-driven to preventive and farm-focused. The next farm bill should provide resources to assist farmers in complying with the law.

HEMP

NASDA recommends amending the federal definition of hemp to increase the total THC concentration to one percent or less. Increasing the THC concentration to one percent would enable farmers to plant more seed varieties. This action also retains limits on THC concentration while giving farmers greater assurance their crop will be viable.

INVASIVE SPECIES

NASDA endorses an increase in funding for the highly successful “Plant Pest and Disease Management & Disaster Prevention” and the “National Clean Plant Network” programs that provide additional tools for domestic invasive species issues.

LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

Food Procurement Efficiency

- The farm bill must include supply chain solutions that create increased equity in food systems for socially disadvantaged as well as black, indigenous and people of color in the agricultural community.

Farm to School Grant Program

- NASDA supports increasing flexibility for participating schools to increase direct purchases of local products outside of the school food service contract. This will increase direct purchasing power and stimulate the local economy. This will also increase opportunities for local farmers and ranchers to participate in Farm to School programs.

Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program

- NASDA recommends increasing the number of farmers markets and other authorized retailers that accept SNAP benefits as a means of encouraging participants to provide consumers with a greater volume and variety of fruits and vegetables while supporting local farmers.

SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT




NASDA recommends increasing funding for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program while ensuring a flexible, locally responsive and state-led program.

TRADE PROMOTION

NASDA supports increasing the Market Access Program that promotes American grown and made food and agricultural products that are in competition with heavily subsidized foreign products. According to an Economic Impact Study of USDA Export Market Development Programs, for every one dollar invested in export market development programs, \$24 is returned in export revenue. This program increases farm income and creates more American jobs in the farm and food sector.

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Contact: RJ Karney | RJ.Karney@nasda.org | 571-447-5324
4350 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 810, Arlington, VA 22203 | www.nasda.org
  @NASDANews  @NASDADC