

2025 FARM BILL



Agricultural retailers and distributors play a vital role in the success of the nation's food security.

These businesses are responsible for getting the right crop inputs to their farmer customers at the right time, which can be difficult in the short timeframe that farmers have to plant. Retailers also provide their farmer customers with crop consulting services and custom pesticide and fertilizer application services.

Preserve the Crop Insurance Program, and like Important Safety Nets; Improve Prevented Planting Dates.



To provide a reliable inventory of crop production inputs to farmers, agricultural retailers take on a significant amount of risk. Crop insurance gives input suppliers the reassurance that repayment for crop inputs supplied at the beginning of the growing season is likely.



Congress should also ask USDA to consider changes to the crop insurance program, like extending the prevented planting date, to reflect the advances in improved technologies. These changes would help provide farmers and suppliers with more certainty.

Conservation

Support Changes to TSP Program

ARA supports the continuation of the TSP program; however, we believe there should be an easier pathway for retailers to be certified by USDA-NRCS. Currently, the certification process to be certified is cumbersome for many retailers and certified crop advisors and we would like to see significant reforms to this process to ensure greater ease of conservation and nutrient stewardship plan implementation.

Biostimulants

Include Plant Biostimulant Language Directing EPA to:

- Establish Uniform definition for “plant biostimulants”
- Amends FIFRA to exclude biostimulants from being identified as pesticides
- Establish a definition for nutritional chemicals
- Amends the definition of vitamin hormone products
- Update 40 CFR 152.6 with new definitions and exclusions



Federal and State Pesticide Preemption

Ensure EPA OPP and State Lead Agencies have Exclusive Pesticide Regulatory Role
ARA supports science-based regulations and ensuring that oversight of pesticides is based on the scientific expertise of career regulators at the EPA's Office of Pesticide Programs (OPP) and State Lead Agencies, versus politicians at the local level where resources and scientific expertise is limited.

Reaffirm EPA is the primary, federal authority under FIFRA for making pesticide findings and decision. States may regulate pesticide registrations and use, but not impose additional labeling or packaging requirements contrary to claims and scientific findings determined by EPA.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permits

Eliminate NPDES Pesticide General Permit (PGP)



Amend the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) and the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (commonly known as the Clean Water Act) to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency or a state from requiring a permit under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) for a discharge of a pesticide from a point source into navigable waters if the discharge is approved under FIFRA. Point source pollution is waste discharged from a distinct place, such as a pipe, channel, or tunnel. Requiring NPDES Pesticide General Permits (PGP) for the discharges of mosquito control and other pesticide products provides no additional environmental protections beyond those already listed on the pesticide label, yet the regulatory burdens are potentially depriving the general public of the economic and health benefits from the use of important pest control products. In the 114th Congress, a bipartisan bill passed the U.S. House of Representatives by an overwhelming margin, marking the third time the elimination of NPDES PGP requirements received bipartisan support in the House. That same Congress, a bipartisan proposal passed the Senate EPW Committee by voice vote.

Broadband Infrastructure

Support the ReConnect Community Partnership Act.



USDA's Reconnect Loan and Grant Program allows corporations, LLCs, co-ops, and state, local, and Tribal governments to apply for funding to construct or improve fixed terrestrial broadband service, fund reasonable pre-application expenses, and fund the acquisition of existing systems with insufficient broadband infrastructure.



This legislation would encourage a community-driven approach to broadband that leverages business buy-in and "skin-in-the-game." To do so, the bill sets aside at least 10 percent of ReConnect program dollars to create the ReConnect Community Partnership Program. Within this set-aside program, the same types of applicants would compete for the same types of grant and loan products as the typical ReConnect Program, but they would compete using an updated scoring scheme.

Research

Support the statistical survey work carried out by the National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS) in support of the Conservation Effects Assessment Project (CEAP) administered by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

CEAP is a relatively new effort by NRCS and is rapidly becoming one of the most important tools that NRCS has to demonstrate to the country how much conservation work is being done on the nation's agricultural land and what that work is accomplishing. The survey work conducted by NASS is essential to the success and quality of the CEAP effort. CEAP is a highly efficient and cost-effective way to demonstrate the outcomes of the conservation practices used by farmers and ranchers. CEAP also enhances NRCS's ability to help ensure that farmers and ranchers are working on top resource challenges.

