Farm Bill 101

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Summary

• Farm Bill Overview

• Federal Program Overview
  – Lauren Golden, Sustainable Agriculture Research and Extension Programs
  – Cara McNab, USDA Risk Management Agency Crop Insurance Programs
  – Orie Winger, Natural Resource Conservation Service Conservation Programs
What is the Farm Bill?

About every five years, Congress develops a massive piece of legislation known as the “farm bill” which sets the ‘rules of the road’ for our nation’s food and farm system. The farm bill contains policies, programs, and funding – everything from rules around who is eligible for a farm loan to funding for food assistance for low-income families.
The New Deal

1. Keep food prices fair for farmers and consumers
2. Ensure an adequate food supply
3. Protect and sustain the country’s vital natural resources
12 Titles

• Title 1: Commodities
• Title 2: Conservation
• Title 3: Trade
• Title 4: Nutrition
• Title 5: Credit
• Title 6: Rural Development
• Title 7: Research, Extension, and Related Matters
12 Titles

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• Title 7: Research, Extension, and Related Matters
• Title 8: Forestry
• Title 9: Energy
12 Titles

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• Title 9: Energy
• Title 10: Specialty Crops & Horticulture
• Title 11: Crop Insurance
12 Titles

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- Title 7: Research, Extension, and Related Matters
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- Title 9: Energy
- Title 10: Specialty Crops & Horticulture
- Title 11: Crop Insurance
- Title 12: Miscellaneous
12 Titles

- Title 1: Commodities
- **Title 2: Conservation**
- Title 3: Trade
- Title 4: Nutrition
- Title 5: Credit
- Title 6: Rural Development
- **Title 7: Research, Extension, and Related Matters**
- Title 8: Forestry
- Title 9: Energy
- **Title 10: Specialty Crops & Horticulture**
- Title 11: Crop Insurance
- **Title 12: Miscellaneous**
Creating a Farm Bill: 4 Main Steps

- Reauthorization
- Appropriations
- Rulemaking
- Implementation
Creating a Farm Bill: 4 Main Steps

Reauthorization

Appropriations  Rulemaking

Implementation
Reauthorization

1. HEARINGS

2. AGRICULTURAL COMMITTEES

3. FULL CONGRESS / “THE FLOOR”

Impact the Reauthorization Process!

- Write your program comments down at the NCAP table!
- Share stories of these programs with Guy Hand. How do you use these programs?
Reauthorization

4. CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

5. FULL CONGRESS / “THE FLOOR” FULL CONGRESS / “THE FLOOR”

6. THE WHITE HOUSE
Creating a Farm Bill: 4 Main Steps

- Reauthorization
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Appropriations

**Mandatory Funding**
- Decided every 5 years
- Automatically funded each year

**Discretionary Funding**
- Funding decided each year during budget setting process
- Not automatically funded

*Has language saying how much money the program is authorized (allowed) to receive, but the program might not get this amount*
Appropriations

• The Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) Program, for example, has been authorized at $60 million per year since it was first introduced in 1985, but has not yet been funded above $27 million per year.

Impact the Appropriations Process!

• Use the program!

• Share thoughts with Michael Simpson, who sits on the House Appropriations Committee
Creating a Farm Bill: 4 Main Steps

- Reauthorization
- Appropriations (Or funding)
- Administration (Or rulemaking)
- Implementation
Administration

• Advocates and experts check in with agency staff at USDA
• Grassroots individuals comment on USDA’s proposed rules for farm bill programs.
Creating a Farm Bill: 4 Main Steps

Reauthorization

- Appropriations (Or funding)
- Administration (Or rulemaking)

Implementation
Implementation

• Do farmers, ranchers, and grassroots organizations use the program?
• Does the program accomplish its goals and reach the people it is meant to reach on the ground?
• Is it having an impact?
How To Provide Input Today

• Sign up for our newsletter to receive action alerts about steps you can take to influence the Farm Bill

• Write down your comments and input on Farm Bill programs at the NCAP Table
  – A few guides to USDA programs are available for your reference

• Share opinions and success stories with Guy
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