



## California Food & Justice Coalition

The California Food and Justice Coalition call on Speaker Pelosi, Representative Cardoza and other California representatives on the Farm Bill Conference Committee to approve a final Farm Bill that supports small and minority farmers; community-driven sustainable, healthy food systems; and reduces hunger. Specifically, we call on representatives to ensure the inclusion of the following provisions in the final Farm Bill that advance these goals:

PROGRAM	DESIRED OUTCOME
<b>Community Food Projects</b>	
Competitive granting program of \$10,000 to \$300,000 for institutions to fight food insecurity through developing community food projects that help promote the self-sufficiency of low-income communities. Only 18 percent of the submitted proposals have received grants during the history of this program. From 2002-2007, program was funded at \$5 million per year.	<i>Adopt Senate funding level of \$10 million mandatory annually.</i>
<b>Rural Business and Industries Loan and Loan Guarantee Program</b>	
Provide loan guarantees for businesses in rural areas. Loans can be used for business/industrial acquisition, construction, modernization, real estate, buildings, equipment, working capital and refinancing. Both bills expand purposes of this program to support regional processing and distribution, focused on benefiting underserved communities.	<i>Adopt Senate provision that includes more comprehensive definitions for local and underserved communities and allows funds to be used in urban areas when directly benefiting rural farmers.</i>
<b>Healthy Food Urban Enterprise Development Grant Program</b>	
This is a new program that would provide grants to fund the development of grants for feasibility studies for businesses, non-profits, farmers, and schools to improve the access of healthy, affordable foods (including those locally produced) in underserved communities in ways which support farm income.	<i>Adopt the Senate provision that creates a "Healthy Food Enterprise Development Center" supported by USDA through a contract to a non-profit entity with \$7 million in mandatory funding for FY09-FY12.</i>
<b>Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program</b>	
Provides grants to States and Indian tribal governments to provide low-income seniors with coupons that can be exchanged for certain locally produced fresh fruits, herbs and vegetables at certified farmers' markets, roadside stands, and community supported agriculture programs. From 2002 – 2007, Congress funded the program at \$15 million annually, which results in each eligible senior having \$10 to spend at farmers' markets each season.	<i>Adopt House funding level of \$15 million mandatory annually.</i>
<b>Value Added Producer Grant Program</b>	
Provides matching grants to farmers and institutions who seek to process their raw agricultural products into marketable goods (such as turning wheat into bread) thereby increasing farm income. Program was allocated \$40 million per year in mandatory funding from 2002-2007, but funding was dropped and became discretionary.	<i>Adopt House provision with \$30 million mandatory annually, with a focus on supporting local food systems and 10% set-aside for Beginning and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers.</i>
<b>Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers</b>	
Provides \$100,000 to \$300,000 grants to organizations (including non profit groups and universities) to encourage and assist socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers to own and operate farms and ranches, and assure equitable participation in the full range of USDA programs. Approximately \$5.9 million was available for this program in 2006.	<i>Adopted House funding level at \$15 million mandatory annually.</i>
<b>Farmers Market Assistance Program (was Farmers' Market Promotion Program) and EBT Use at Farmers Markets</b>	
Competitive granting program that helps improve and expand farmers markets, farm stands, community supported agriculture programs and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities. Not assigned mandatory funding in 2002 Farm Bill; approximately \$1 million was appropriated for this program in 2007. EBT stands for Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) and allows food stamp recipients to buy food using an "ATM-like" card.	<i>Adopt House funding level of \$35 million mandatory over 5 years, and allow funds to be used for EBT at farmers markets.</i>
<b>Geographical Preference</b>	

	<i>Adopt language included in both House and Senate bills that allows federal meal programs to list geographic preference in their procurement bids (increases schools ability to purchase from local farmers).</i>
<b>Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program</b>	
Competitive grants program supporting education, extension, and technical assistance initiatives directed at new farmers. Grants can be used for financial and entrepreneurial training, mentoring and apprenticeship programs, "land link" programs, and other education and outreach activities.	<i>Adopt House Provision of \$15 million mandatory with 25% set aside for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers</i>
<b>Food Stamp Nutrition Education (FSNE)</b>	
FSNE is a federal/state partnership that provides grants to institutions to educate food stamp eligible people about how they can make healthy food choices and choose active lifestyles. FSNE funding currently cannot be used for work that seeks to address the environmental and social factors that limit people's ability to eat healthy food. For instance, unhealthy food is a staple in most school lunches and negatively impacts children from families with limited incomes who depend on the free and reduced meal programs, however, advocating for healthier school meals is not allowed under this program. In 2004, the Federal Government directed \$460 million towards this program.	<i>Adopt House language that allows FSNE funds to be used to support public health and community food security based approaches. Such language would allow FSNE funding to be used to address larger social and environmental factors that impact access to healthy food and physical activity by people eligible for food stamps.</i>
<b>Food Stamp Program</b>	
The program provides monthly benefits to eligible low-income families that can be used to purchase food. The program received \$24 billion in funding in 2003 Farm Bill. In 2003 21.26 million individuals nationwide participated in the program. Approximately four in 10 people who are eligible for food stamps do not apply for food stamps. In California only 50% of eligible people participate.	<i>Adopt House provisions that increase \$1 meal average benefit level and increase minimum benefit level from \$10/month to \$16/month, and adopt Senate provision that encourage families to save by raising \$2000 asset limit.</i>
<b>Food Banks – TEFAP</b>	
TEFAP helps supplement the diets of people in need, including elderly people, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance through food banks and food pantries.	<i>Adopt House funding level of \$250 million annually to increase ability of food banks to feed people.</i>
<b>Study and Report on Food Deserts</b>	
In the Research title of the Senate Farm Bill the Secretary of Agriculture is required to carry out a study of areas in the U.S. with limited access to affordable and nutritious foods, with particular focus on predominantly lower income neighborhoods and communities. These areas are increasingly being referred to as "Food Deserts"	<i>Adopt Senate language calling for a national study of Food Deserts</i>
<b>Outreach and Technical Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Program (2501)</b>	
Competitive grants program that funds agencies to offer training and technical assistance to minority farmers to help them strengthen their farming operations and increase use of USDA programs.	<i>Adopt House provision that provides \$15 million mandatory annually.</i>
<b>Settlement of Unresolved Pigford Cases</b>	
USDA has failed to review and settle claims and appeals filed against the department following the settlement of the African-American farmers' lawsuit <i>Pigford v. USDA Secretary</i> . While many farmers lost their land prior to the settlement and them and their families are awaiting settlement, many are still on their land as they are filing their claims. Delays are reviewing and settling these claims and appeals has caused further hardship among African-American farmers who at risk of losing their land.	<i>Support Senate Provision that mandates a moratorium on loan acceleration and foreclosure if a farmer has a pending discrimination claim against the USDA; and adopt Senate provision that authorizes \$100 million to settle claims in the Pigford lawsuit and allows additional funds to be appropriated if necessary</i>
<b>Specialty Crop Block Grants</b>	
States awarded to states to promote and strengthen their specialty crop industry. Specialty crops include fruits, vegetables and nuts. Each state must develop a plan for how they will use their block grant. USDA estimates that 12% of specialty crop producers in the U.S. be categorized as socially disadvantaged.	<i>Adopt Senate language that instructs states to consider the needs of beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers who produce specialty crops in their grant making plan.</i>

