

Why care about the Farm Bill?

The Farm Bill, a piece of legislation that generally gets rewritten every 5 years, has 10 titles that affect everything from commodity payments to conservation measures, nutrition programs, credit and rural development, trade, forestry, energy, and research. Whether you live in an urban or rural area, whether you're a farmer or not, this huge bill affects nearly everyone. The Farm Bill provides food to the hungry through Food Stamps and the school lunch program. It supports farm conservation with programs like the Conservation Security Program, which pays farmers for good stewardship practices. The Farm Bill includes commodity payments, the Conservation Reserve Program, Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC), Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs, Country of Origin Labeling, and a host of other, equally vital programs. It provides training for farmers to market their products, creates grants to educate consumers on the advantages of biodiesel, helps protect family farms from bankruptcy, and even provide access to high-speed broadband internet access to rural citizens. The Farm Bill is about so much more than just farming, it's about health and equality, innovation and entrepreneurship, great food and great communities. Almost all of us are directly affected by the Farm Bill, because it provides the means by which we all get our food in some way. Only when we add our voices and let our decision-makers know what we want from the Farm Bill will we ever move forward. If we say nothing, then nothing will change for the better. There are helpful, progressive parts of the Farm Bill that would never exist without people like you fighting for issues they believe in. With your help, we can continue this tradition of progress.