

2018 Farm Bill Conference Report Top 10 Highlights

The 2018 Farm Bill conference report includes key wins for American farmers and ranchers, rural communities, and consumers – all within a budget-neutral framework. The conference report strengthens the farm safety net and provides certainty and flexibility to America’s farmers and ranchers. It helps combat the predatory trading practices of foreign countries. It helps improve our response to natural disasters, and it restructures critical incentives to improve our soil, water, and other natural resources. The conference report also makes improvements to the nation’s largest anti-hunger program (SNAP) to improve program integrity and incentivize work. Key highlights include:

- Improving farm policy by:
 - Providing a nationwide yield update for Price Loss Coverage (PLC) beginning with the 2020 crop year and allowing PLC to better respond to market conditions;
 - Making several key improvements to Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC), including increased yield plugs and yield trend adjustments;
 - Providing a new ARC/PLC election for 2019/2020 and authorizing annual ARC/PLC elections (crop-by-crop and farm-by-farm) beginning in 2021;
 - Increasing loan rates to more relevant levels;
 - Improving the dairy safety net for large, mid-sized, and small dairy producers; and
 - Protecting farm families from additional, costly, and unneeded red tape.
- Improving the incentives and opportunities within the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and shifting additional resources (\$275 million per year) to the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). The conference report also targets the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to our most environmentally sensitive lands.
- Laying the groundwork for improved Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Policy (SNAP) policy by preserving the administration’s flexibility to rein in SNAP work requirement waivers for able bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs). The conference report focuses on improving program integrity and otherwise incentivizing work to move people toward self-sufficiency.
- Reducing the threat of catastrophic wildfires by renewing a key categorical exclusion (CE) and expanding its purpose to allow for expedited reduction of hazardous fuels in our forests.
- Making significant improvements to rural broadband delivery, including forward-looking standards to ensure we are meeting next-generation rural broadband needs.
- Enhancing U.S. agricultural trade by streamlining the suite of market promotion initiatives under one umbrella and providing \$470 million in additional funding.
- Providing \$300 million in funding for animal disease prevention and management efforts, including the stockpiling of foot-and-mouth disease (FMD) vaccine.
- Protecting crop insurance and making several key improvements, including new insurance products for forage producers and improvements to whole farm revenue coverage for specialty crop producers.
- Providing an increase of over \$600 million in funding for research, extension, and education projects, keeping American agriculture at the forefront of innovation and productivity.
- Dedicating funding to rural health projects to help Americans struggling with opioid addictions and other substance abuse disorders.