



## FARM BILL ISSUES ON WHICH WE AGREE

March 24, 2017

On March 15, 2017, farm and commodity organizations sent a letter to the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committees pointing to the sharp fall in farm prices and income since 2013 and asking Congress to provide additional funding in order to develop an effective farm income safety net in the 2018 Farm Bill. A number of these organizations have met to discuss specific issues that need to be addressed in the next farm bill and will continue to work to develop consensus proposals to share with the Agriculture Committees on potential ways to resolve them. The following organizations are in agreement on the attached initial list of positions. To be clear, the beginning of this document covers only those issues where there is a consensus on every issue.

As our discussions continue and as guidance from the Committees is provided, we hope to expand this list to cover additional issues expected to be considered during negotiation of the new Farm Bill.

### Overarching Issues:

Increase funding in the 2018 Farm Bill in order to address the significant reductions in farm prices and income incurred since 2013, and to meet other critical needs.

Federal crop insurance and commodity programs are our top funding priorities.

### Commodity Programs:

Continue a counter-cyclical program like the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program and a revenue program like the Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC) program.

Change the ARC and PLC programs to make them more effective and fairer to all farmers.

If the ARC and PLC programs continue, farmers must be allowed to re-elect and re-enroll on a crop by crop basis.

Commodity program payments should be based on recent historical crop production rather than on current year planting.

### Crop Insurance Programs:

Oppose reducing premium discounts.

## **Conservation Programs:**

Maintain strong funding for federal conservation programs which preserve environmental benefits, while continuing the prioritization of working lands conservation programs.

Maintain strong funding of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP).

Examine the rental rates of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) annually at enrollment to ensure they mirror the rental rates of comparable land in the immediate area.

Improve State Technical Committees to make them more ag-friendly by encouraging producers' participation and input.

## **Other Programs:**

Ensure adequate funding for agricultural research and education.

Continue work on simplifying procedures, reducing paperwork requirements and streamlining interactions between the Farm Service Agency (FSA), the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Risk Management Agency (RMA) via the Acreage Crop Reporting Streamlining Initiative (ACRSI).

Continue and work to improve the Young and Beginning Farmer Programs implemented in the 2014 Farm Bill.

American Farm Bureau Federation  
American Soybean Association  
National Association of Wheat Growers  
National Barley Growers Association  
National Corn Growers Association  
National Farmers Union  
National Sunflower Association  
U.S. Canola Association

## **Future Farm Policy Work:**

On several other issues, more than a majority of the organizations are in agreement, but one or two have conflicting policy statements. We plan to continue to work towards agreement, but rather than another consensus document, we hope to "negotiate" some of those differences in future meetings and provide additional input to Congress.

Note: The National Cotton Council, Southern Peanut Farmers Federation and USA Rice have also participated in these discussions but do not have sufficient policy yet to support these provisions. All three of those groups, as well as those listed on this statement, intend to continue to work together to see if we can come to further agreements on these and other 2018 farm bill issues.