

Deadline for National, Regional, and State Organizations to Sign: COB Friday, March 10
To Sign, Please Contact Christy Seyfert, American Soybean Association, at cseyfert@soy.org

March XX, 2023

The Honorable Sheldon Whitehouse
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Budget
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Grassley
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Budget
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jodey Arrington
Chairman
U.S. House Committee on Budget
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Brendan Boyle
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on Budget
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Whitehouse and Arrington and Ranking Members Grassley and Boyle:

As you develop the fiscal year 2024 budget in this farm bill reauthorization year, we write to express our strong support for providing the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and House Committee on Agriculture with sufficient budgetary resources to write a new bipartisan, multi-year, comprehensive, and meaningful piece of legislation.

Just as there are many pressures on the federal budget, there are many pressures on U.S. farmers and others throughout the agricultural supply chain who provide food, feed, fuel, and fiber to consumers across the United States and abroad.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), international sales of U.S. farm and food products reached \$196 billion in 2022. The leading market for these products is marked with geopolitical volatility: China. During the trade war with China that began in 2018, U.S. agriculture endured significant market impacts, which unfortunately revealed gaps in the farm safety net. If a trade war with our largest trading partner hardly triggered the farm safety net provided in the current farm bill – a Title I safety net that has been shrinking over the past 20 years – it is difficult to envision a scenario that would provide meaningful assistance without significant improvements. Continuing rising tensions with this important trading partner underscore the need in the next farm bill for a more meaningful, predictable farm safety net and the need to invest more into trade promotion programs to help diversify agricultural markets.

Market volatility with China is only one example of the many disruptions impacting U.S. agriculture during the life of the current farm bill. The Russian invasion of Ukraine, COVID-19 and other supply chain disruptions, non-tariff trade barriers erected by multiple countries, and devastating natural disasters have tested the effectiveness of current farm policy. Increased production input costs have as well, with USDA projecting that most expense categories will remain above their 2021 levels in 2023 both in nominal and inflation-adjusted dollars. These projected high input costs, coupled with lower projections for many crop cash receipts, are cause for concern for farm country: USDA's February 2023 Farm Income Forecast publication projects a 20.7 percent decline in net cash farm income in 2023 relative to 2022.

Projections such as this, when realized, often result in financial stress and calls for ad hoc or supplemental disaster assistance to farmers and ranchers – that is, assistance outside of the farm bill. In fact, between 2018-2021, ad hoc assistance made up approximately 70% of direct farm payments due to challenges described above. Ad hoc assistance is necessary in times of need but is not a timely, reliable, or predictable safety net for farmers and ranchers. The upcoming farm bill reauthorization provides an opportunity to address very real needs in agriculture and rely less on off-budget ad hoc assistance.

In addition to needs highlighted above, farm bill budget resources are needed for protecting and enhancing crop insurance to assist with volatile weather and crop loss, improving access to voluntary conservation incentives, addressing rural development needs, investing in research for innovation and competitiveness, providing opportunities to help the nation become more energy independent and food secure, and supporting solutions to address logistics challenges.

Sufficient budgetary resources will be needed to craft a new bipartisan, multi-year, comprehensive, and meaningful piece of legislation. As you work to build the federal budget for fiscal year 2024, we seek your support for providing sufficient resources to the committees to craft the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

(National, regional, state organizations as of 3/8/23 11:15 am)

National Associations

Agricultural Retailers Association
American Agri-Women
American Association of Crop Insurers
American Cotton Shippers Association
American Farm Bureau Federation
American Pistachio Growers
American Pulse Association
American Seed Trade Association
American Society of Farm Managers and Rural Appraisers
American Soybean Association
American Sugar Alliance
American Sugarbeet Growers Association
Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Foundation
Association of Equipment Manufacturers
Cherry Marketing Institute
Cotton Growers Warehouse Association
Cotton Warehouse Association of America
Crop Insurance and Reinsurance Bureau
Crop Insurance Professionals Association
Ducks Unlimited
Farm Credit Council
Independent Community Bankers of America
International Fresh Produce Association

National Alfalfa & Forage Alliance
National Association of Conservation Districts
National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
National Barley Growers Association
National Corn Growers Association
National Council of Farmer Cooperatives
National Grain and Feed Association
National Milk Producers Federation
National Pork Producers Council
National Potato Council
National Sorghum Producers
National Sunflower Association
North American Meat Institute
Pheasants Forever
Quail Forever
Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance
The Fertilizer Institute
U.S. Apple Association
U.S. Canola Association
U.S. Peanut Federation
U.S. Rice Producers
USA Dry Pea & Lentil Council

State and Regional Associations

Agribusiness Association of Iowa
Arkansas Soybean Association
California Citrus Mutual
California Cotton Ginners and Growers Association
Colorado Dry Bean Committee
Colorado Potato Administrative Committee
Corn Growers of North Carolina
Delta Council
Delta Waterfowl
Florida Agri-Women
Florida Farm Bureau Federation
Georgia/Florida Soybean Association
Idaho Nursery & Landscape Association
Idaho Pest Management Association
Idaho Potato Commission
Illinois Corn Growers Association
Illinois Farm Bureau
Illinois Soybean Association
Iowa Corn Growers Association
Iowa Soybean Association

Kansas Association of Wheat Growers
Kansas Corn Growers Association
Kansas Farm Bureau
Kansas Grain Sorghum Producers Association
Kansas Soybean Association
Kentucky Corn Growers Association
Louisiana Cotton & Grain Association
Louisiana Farm Bureau Federation
Maine Potato Board
Michigan Agri-Business Association
Michigan Soybean Association
Mid-Atlantic Soybean Association
Midwest Council on Agriculture
Midwest Forage Association
Minnesota Canola Council
Minnesota Soybean Growers Association
Mississippi Soybean Association
Missouri Soybean Association
Nebraska Agri-Business Association
Nebraska Corn Growers Association
Nebraska Soybean Association
New York Corn & Soybean Growers Association
New York Farm Bureau
New York Green Industry Council
North Carolina Egg Association
North Carolina Soybean Producers Association
North Carolina State Grange
North Dakota Corn Growers Association
North Dakota Soybean Growers Association
North Harvest Bean Growers Association
Northern Canola Growers Association
Northland Potato Growers Association
NYS Agribusiness Association
Ohio AgriBusiness Association
Ohio Corn & Wheat Growers Association
Ohio Soybean Association
Oklahoma Soybean Association
Oregon Association of Nurseries
Oregon Cattlemen's Association
Oregonians for Food and Shelter
Palmetto AgriBusiness Council
Panhandle Peanut Growers Association
Pennsylvania Cooperative Potato Growers
Pennsylvania Farm Bureau

Plains Cotton Growers, Inc.
PNW Canola Association
Snake River Sugarbeet Growers Association
South Carolina Corn & Soybean Association
South Carolina Farm Bureau Federation
South Carolina Peach Council
South Dakota Agri-Business Association
Southeastern Cotton Ginners Association, Inc.
Southwest Council of Agribusiness
Tennessee Soybean Association
Texas Agri-Women
Texas Corn Producers Association
Texas Soybean Association
Virginia Cattlemen's Association
Virginia Farm Bureau
Virginia Soybean Association
Washington State Potato Commission
Western Agricultural Processors Association
Western Peanut Growers Association
Wisconsin Corn Growers Association
Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association
Wisconsin Soybean Association

CC: Members of the Senate Committee on Budget
Members of the House Committee on Budget
Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
Members of the House Committee on Agriculture