

## **What's currently in the Farm Bill? Farm Bill 2002 Overview**

Title I:	Commodity Programs – income support for wheat, feed grains, cotton, rice, oilseeds, peanuts, sugar & dairy etc
Title II:	Conservation – EQIP, CRP, CREP, others
Title III:	Trade – develop and expand export markets
Title IV:	Nutrition – wide range of food programs: Food Stamps, domestic nutrition programs, farmers' market WIC coupons, commodity distribution, others
Title V:	Credit – loan programs for farmers and rural businesses
Title VI:	Rural Development – rural business development, services, water and wastewater programs, value-added product development programs, others
Title VII:	Research – agricultural research and extension
Title VIII:	Forestry – Forest Service programs; Forest Land Enhancement, Sustainable Forestry Outreach, Community Based Forestry
Title IX:	Energy – research and development for bio-based fuels
Title X:	Miscellaneous – animal wealth and health programs, food safety, organic agriculture programs, country of origin labeling, crop insurance, disaster assistance, others

### **How to Get Involved**

- Participate in Farm Bill 2007 discussions hosted in your area and/or organize your own “listening” sessions
- Develop your own set of talking points consistent with your organization's position and use them while talking to a legislator
- Collaborate with other stakeholders on position statements or letter to legislators
- Have a panel, workshop or speaker at your organization's board or member meeting
- Write an article for your newsletter describing the Farm Bill and the importance for your members
- Start a Farm Bill study session in your community
- Share your 2007 Farm Bill suggestions and feedback with Children's Alliance, FRAC, Washington State Food and Nutrition Council, ADA, and/or other advocates
- Invite lawmakers to visit your program sites
- Ask farmers, elected officials, state food stamp directors, and other stakeholders testifying at hearings or listening sessions to include comments about the importance of your program

## **Farm Bill 2007 Various Advocates' Points of View**

### **NUTRITION ADVOCATES:**

- Many Americans are overfed but undernourished.
- USDA's food assistance programs must be available to those in need and adequately funded. Improving the nutritional status of Americans needs to rise in priority in food assistance programs, other food programs, and truly, for all Americans. Increased investment in nutrition education and nutrition research is necessary and it must be sustained. Having up-to-date knowledge of the nutrition composition of the food supply is essential for all of work in food, nutrition and health to bear fruit.
- Need for federal research exploring the relationships between diet (particularly dietary patterns) and health.
- Definition of food security has evolved to include both access to healthy food and an abundant safe food supply.

### **HUNGER ADVOCATES:**

More than 38.2 million Americans live in households experiencing food insecurity. Most food stamp participants are children, with half of all participants under 18 years of age (USDA).

- Focus on the Food Stamp Program and retaining entitlement (mandatory) status
- Focus on overarching, sweeping reforms as well as seemingly smaller changes that would improve certain aspects of the program.
  - Close gaps in coverage
  - Improve adequacy of benefits – increase the minimum benefit to \$25
  - Further simplify the program for client and caseworkers
- Continue to allow choice in food purchases and support healthy choices through nutrition education
- Emphasize the positive aspects of the Food Stamp Program in addition to suggesting improvements to it.

### **FARM ADVOCATES:**

- Provide safety net for farmers and ranchers
- Replace existing counter-cyclical and loan-deficiency payments with less distorting programs compatible with global trading policies
- Reward environmental stewardship with green payments
- Conservation of natural resources
- Create new markets to expand economic opportunities and nurture entrepreneurship

## Farm Bill 2007 Helpful Resources

American Farmland Trust ([www.farmland.org](http://www.farmland.org)) - Leading a campaign to transform U.S. farm policy for well-managed, protected farm and ranch land that provides open space, clean water, healthy food, wildlife habitat and a renewed connectedness between the farm community and the rest of America.

Community Food Security Coalition ([www.foodsecurity.org](http://www.foodsecurity.org)) - North American organization of social and economic justice, environmental, nutrition, sustainable agriculture, community development, labor, anti-poverty, anti-hunger, and other groups.

The Children's Alliance ([www.childrensalliance.org](http://www.childrensalliance.org)) - Washington's statewide child advocacy organization working on public policies and practices that deliver the essentials that kids need to thrive - confidence, stability, health, and safety.

Farm and Food Policy Project (<http://www.farmandfoodproject.org>) - A collaborative of diverse organizations united by the common vision of a more sustainable food and agricultural system for the United States.

Environmental Working Group (<http://www.ewg.org/issues/siteindex/index.php>) - Follows farm subsidy and organic food standards issues as well as others.

2007 Farm Bill Blog ([www.farmland2007.com](http://www.farmland2007.com)) - On this blog site, follows developments in the formulation of the 2007 Farm Bill, as reported by Phil Fraas, a Washington agricultural attorney and veteran of six previous Farm Bills.

Food Research and Action Center ([www.frac.org](http://www.frac.org)) - The leading national nonprofit organization working to improve public policies and public-private partnerships to eradicate hunger and undernutrition in the United States.

Hunger & Environmental Nutrition Dietetic Practice Group of the American Dietetic Association ([www.hendpg.com](http://www.hendpg.com)) - HEN's vision is that all people have access to food from a healthful, sustainable environment while promoting optimal nutrition and well being for all people.

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy ([www.iatp.org](http://www.iatp.org)) - Follows conservation and sustainable farming issues in the Farm Bill 2007 debate.

National Agriculture Law Center (<http://www.nationalaglawcenter.org/assets/farmbills/commodity.html>) - Provides a comparison of all Farm Bills.

National Family Farm Coalition ([www.nffc.net](http://www.nffc.net)) - Contains a proposed Food from Family Farms Act: a Proposal for the 2007 US Farm Bill.

Organic Trade Association ([www.ota.com](http://www.ota.com)) OTA's Farm Bill Outline for Advancing Organic Agriculture outlines the organization's priorities for the Farm Bill.

Senator Harkin's Website (<http://harkin.senate.gov/agriculture/farm-bill-summary.cfm>) - Provides a good summary of the Farm Bill titles.

USDA (<http://www.usda.gov/farmland2002/>) - A collective effort by USDA agencies to explain the farm bill provisions and their implementation.

Washington State Farm Bill Forum (<http://www.usda.gov/documents/BBFWA110305.doc>) - This transcript includes testimony from various advocates in Washington State.

Washington State Food and Nutrition Council ([www.wsfncc.org](http://www.wsfncc.org)) - WSFNC's Annual Conference included presentations on the farm bill and those presentations are online.

## Farm Bill 2007 Discussion Group Questions

### How Should Farm Policy:

Be designed to encourage production and consumption of healthful foods?

#### *Follow-up questions*

Does the commodities food program support unhealthy farm subsidies and a dependence on unhealthy food?

Could the commodities food program connect with sustainable farms, for the health of all?

Be designed to provide reliable nutrition education for American consumers?

Address food insecurity for low-income families?

Address food safety (intentional and unintentional) issues?

Address unintended consequences and ensure that new and next generation farmers are not discouraged from entering farming?

Be designed to maximize U.S. competitiveness?

Be designed to effectively and fairly distribute assistance to producers?

Best achieve conservation and environmental goals?

Ensure that federal rural and farm programs provide effective assistance to rural areas?

Ensure that agricultural product development, marketing and research related issues be addressed?

What are the most important long-term goals or outcomes that should guide the next farm bill?

What are some of the most important emerging trends or needs *in agriculture* to which the next farm bill ought to respond?

What are some of the most important emerging trends or needs *in our communities* to which the next farm bill ought to respond?

What are some of the most important emerging *consumer* trends or needs to which the next farm bill ought to respond?