

# 2023 FARM BILL

## PRIORITIES FOR STATE DEPARTMENTS OF AGRICULTURE

The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture will direct its policy advocacy efforts regarding the bill toward 10 specific policy areas. The next Farm Bill must remain unified, securing a commitment to American agriculture and the critical food and nutritional assistance programs for those who need it most.

### AGRICULTURE RESEARCH

NASDA recommends significant funding for research focusing on the safety and security of the food system and improving and protecting our natural resources. Robust funding for agricultural research and extension programs, and infrastructure, particularly within our nation's many outstanding agricultural colleges and universities, is vital to ensuring producers remain competitive domestically and globally.

### ANIMAL DISEASE

NASDA supports a comprehensive program of animal disease prevention and management, including three critical components: early disease detection and surveillance, prevention, and rapid response. NASDA recommends building upon the three-tiered program established by the 2018 Farm Bill and ensuring the National Animal Vaccine and Veterinary Countermeasures Bank has adequate funds to increase available resources for the livestock industry. NASDA endorses developing and enacting a new funding mechanism to build an early disease detection warning system to help support coordination between intergovernmental agencies and industry for a One Health approach for preparing and responding to new disease outbreaks.

### CONSERVATION AND CLIMATE RESILIENCY

#### Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

- NASDA supports increasing funding for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program.

#### Environmental Quality Incentive Program

- NASDA supports increasing total Environmental Quality Incentive Program funding as well as increases in the program's federal matching contribution percentage.

#### Climate Initiatives

- NASDA recommends additional investments in research, incentive programs for voluntary practices and technical assistance that would equip more farmers and ranchers with additional options to protect and conserve natural resources through on-farm practices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase carbon sequestration and adjust to a changing climate.
- NASDA supports compensating farmers and ranchers already using climate smart strategies to reduce emissions, sequester carbon and improve resiliency

### CYBER SECURITY

NASDA supports maintaining the IFPTI/LSU-NCBRT/NMSU-NMDA Consortium at the authorized level of \$20 million a year. Cyberattacks pose risks of serious harm to businesses within the agriculture and agri-business sectors that include financial losses, loss of confidential business information and intellectual property and disruptions to our nation's food supply.

### FOOD SAFETY

The Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) is a landmark bill which has overhauled American food safety regulation from response-driven to preventive and farm-focused. Congress should address

the variety of implementation challenges with the final FSMA rules. The next Farm Bill should provide resources to assist producers in complying with FSMA.

## HEMP

NASDA recommends amending the federal definition of hemp to increase the total THC concentration to one percent or less. Increasing the total THC concentration to one percent would allow for use of available seed varieties, provide greater assurance to the producers that they have a viable crop and still places limits on THC concentration.

## INVASIVE SPECIES

NASDA endorses an increase in funding for the highly successful “Plant Pest and Disease Management & Disaster Prevention” and the “National Clean Plant Network” to provide additional tools for domestic invasive species issues. Bold action is required because invasive plants and pests are a catastrophic threat to farmers and ranchers.

## LOCAL FOOD SYSTEMS

### Food Procurement Efficiency

The Farm Bill must include supply chain solutions that create increased equity in the food systems for socially disadvantaged as well as black, indigenous and people of color in the agricultural community.

### Farm to School Grant Program

NASDA supports increasing flexibility for participating schools to increase direct purchases of local products outside of the school food service contract. This will increase direct purchasing power and stimulate the local economy. This will also increase opportunities for local farmers and ranchers to participate in Farm to School programs.

### Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program

NASDA recommends the Farm Bill increase the number of farmers markets and other authorized retailers who accept SNAP benefits as a means of encouraging participants to provide consumers a greater volume and variety of fruits and vegetables, while supporting local farmers.

## SPECIALTY CROP BLOCK GRANT




NASDA recommends increasing funding for the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP) while ensuring a flexible, locally responsive and state-led program. NASDA supports expanding the SCBGP funding eligibility to hemp crops with horticultural uses through the dual designation of hemp as a specialty crop based on the manner and purpose for which it is grown.

## TRADE PROMOTION

The Market Access Program promotes American-grown and produced food and ag products that are in competition with heavily subsidized foreign products. For every \$1 invested in export market development programs, \$24 is returned in export revenue. This means significant positive effects for farmers and ranchers like increased income and creates more American jobs in the farm and food sector. NASDA supports increasing MAP funding to better promote America’s food and ag products in demand across the globe.

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Contact: RJ Karney | [RJ.Karney@nasda.org](mailto:RJ.Karney@nasda.org) | 571-447-5324  
4350 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 810, Arlington, VA 22203 | [www.nasda.org](http://www.nasda.org)  
  @NASDANews  @NASDADC