

# Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act of 2011

S. 1850, H.R. 3236

## Investing in the future of American agriculture



Agriculture is a vibrant sector of our nation's economy, yet high barriers to entry make farming and ranching one of the hardest careers to pursue. Limited access to land and markets, hyperinflation in land prices, high input costs, farm and tax policy disadvantages, and lack of training discourage many would-be producers from entering agriculture. As a result, the average American farmer is now 57-years-old, and the fastest growing group of farm operators are those 65 years and older. Despite these significant hurdles, there are dedicated people who see great opportunities in agriculture today and want to start their own farm or ranch businesses.

### Bill Basics

The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will invest in the next generation of American producers by:

- Enabling access to land, credit, and crop insurance for new producers.
- Assisting new producers to launch and strengthen new farm and value-added businesses.
- Helping new producers become good land stewards.
- Providing training, mentoring, and research that beginning farmers and ranchers need to be successful.
- Conducting outreach on agricultural job opportunities for military veterans.

### Why It Matters

- The future of family farming and ranching in America – and the viability of our nation's food supply – depends upon removing existing obstacles to entry into farming so that more people can start to farm.
- This bill encompasses a national strategy for addressing those barriers, focusing on the issues that consistently rank as the greatest challenges for beginning producers.
- This bill makes an important investment in the next generation of farmers and ranchers at a cost of just a fraction of one percent of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's budget.

**For More Information:** All Members are encouraged to co-sponsor the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act of 2011. Contact Leah Rosales in Rep. Walz's office at (202) 225-2472 or [Leah.Rosales@mail.house.gov](mailto:Leah.Rosales@mail.house.gov), Alan Feyerham in Rep. Fortenberry's office (202) 225-4806 or [Alan.Feyerham@mail.house.gov](mailto:Alan.Feyerham@mail.house.gov), or Mark Halverson in Sen. Harkin's office at (202) 224-3254 or [Mark\\_Halverson@harkin.senate.gov](mailto:Mark_Halverson@harkin.senate.gov)



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