

# Conservation Compliance and Sodsaver

## 2012 Farm Bill

Preserving our natural resources while improving the farm safety net



Basic conservation requirements to protect against soil erosion and wetland drainage have been a condition of receiving farm subsidies since 1985. This conservation “compliance” has dramatically reduced soil erosion on farmland and protected wetlands, keeping land productive and important natural resources intact. Today, the biggest farm subsidy paid by U.S. taxpayers is for crop insurance. With this shift in the prominence of crop insurance and with proposed changes to the farm safety net that will accelerate this shift, compliance should be reattached to crop insurance subsidies, as it was up until 1996. In addition, producers and land investors who convert valuable native prairie and prime grasslands to crop production should be ineligible for commodity and insurance subsidies through a new “Sodsaver” provision.

### 2012 Farm Bill

The 2012 Farm Bill should modernize compliance by:

- Reattaching basic conservation requirements to the receipt of federal crop insurance subsidies.
- Applying soil conservation requirements to all land receiving federal subsidies and eroding in an unsustainable manner.
- Enacting a nationwide “Sodsaver” provision.

### Why It Matters

- Conservation compliance has protected the productivity of farmland by significantly decreasing soil erosion and protecting wetlands and sensitive lands.
- The majority of producers who participate in current crop insurance programs also comply with conservation compliance through farm programs.
- With the receipt of subsidies comes a responsibility to protect resources for future generations; most farmers agree, yet are placed at a competitive disadvantage when poor stewards are allowed to cut corners and reap the same public benefits.
- Conservation compliance saves the government millions of dollars in disaster and crop insurance payments, while protecting vital natural resources.



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