



November 15, 2023

The Honorable Debbie Stabenow
Chair, Senate Agriculture Committee

The Honorable John Boozman
Ranking Member, Senate Agriculture Committee

The Honorable Glenn "GT" Thompson
Chair, House Agriculture Committee

The Honorable David Scott
Ranking Member, House Agriculture Committee

Dear Chair Stabenow, Ranking Member Boozman, Chair Thompson, and Ranking Member Scott:

The National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) - an alliance of over 150 organizations with farmer and food system networks across all 50 states - and our undersigned member organizations write in support of the one-year bipartisan agreement to extend the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018. While we encourage Congress to remain focused on passing a strong, bipartisan farm bill as soon as possible, the already burgeoning ramifications of expiration require immediate attention to avoid further impacts.

On October 1, 2023, the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 Farm Bill) expired, initiating a chain reaction of impacts on a wide variety of U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs. Perhaps most significantly, the 2018 Farm Bill's expiration has left some USDA programs without resources given that they are not considered part of the farm bill's permanent baseline funding. These vital programs - which Congress supported in the bipartisan 2018 Farm Bill - operate in all fifty states, and a failure to fund them in an extension would negatively impact countless farmers, ranchers, and food system stakeholders. In particular, NSAC's members are pleased to see full funding for several such programs in the proposed extension, including the National Organic Certification Cost-Share, Scholarships for 1890's Institutions, and the Organic Production & Market Data Initiative. These programs, which have small price tags but big impacts, help farmers access higher-value organic markets and expand access to agricultural education.

Furthermore, the extension addresses numerous programs that currently lack the legal authority to operate following the 2018 Farm Bill's expiration. The Local Agriculture Market Program (LAMP), the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Program (OREI), and the Farming Opportunities Training and Outreach (FOTO) are just some of the essential USDA programs lacking legal authority given the expiration of the 2018 Farm Bill, and consequently are unable to enter into new agreements or contracts until the one-year extension is signed into law.

Thank you for your collective leadership in moving toward the reauthorization of the next farm bill. As you continue to pursue that goal, we encourage swift passage of the one-year extension.

Sincerely,

Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association
C.A.S.A. del Llano (Communities Assuring a Sustainable Agriculture)
California Climate & Agriculture Network (CalCAN)
California FarmLink
Carolina Farm Stewardship Association
Catholic Rural Life
CCOF
Center for Rural Affairs
Certified Naturally Grown
Chicago Food Policy Action Council
Clagett Farm/Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Climate Land Leaders
Coastal Enterprises, Inc.
Community Alliance with Family Farmers
Community Farm Alliance
Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture
Cultivate Kansas City
Dakota Rural Action
Ecological Farming Association
Farm Aid
Farmers Market Coalition
Farms to Grow, Inc.
Florida Organic Growers
Food Animal Concerns Trust (FACT)
FoodCorps
GrassWorks
Hmong National Development, Inc.
Illinois Stewardship Alliance
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Interfaith Sustainable Food Collaborative
Izaak Walton League of America
Kansas Rural Center
Land for Good
Land Stewardship Project
La Semilla Food Center
LiveWell Colorado
MAFO
Maine Farmland Trust
Marbleseed
Michael Fields Agricultural Institute
Michigan Food & Farming Systems – MIFFS

Michigan Organic Food and Farm Alliance
Midwest Organic and Sustainable Education Service
Missouri Coalition for the Environment
Montana Organic Association
National Bison Association
National Center for Frontier Communities
National Hmong American Farmers
National Young Farmers Coalition
Nebraska Sustainable Agriculture Society
New Entry Sustainable Farming Project
Northeast Organic Dairy Producers Alliance
Northeast Organic Farming Association of New York (NOFA-NY)
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont (NOFA-VT)
Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Working Group
Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society
Northwest Center for Alternatives to Pesticides
Ohio Ecological Food & Farm Association
Oregon Tilth
Organic Farmers Agency for Relationship Marketing (OFARM)
Organic Farming Research Foundation
Organic Seed Alliance Port
Pasa Sustainable Agriculture, Pesticide Action Network
Rhode Island Food Policy Council
Rural Advancement Foundation International – USA
Slow Food USA
Sprout NOLA
Sustainable Food Center
The Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture
The National Center for Appropriate Technology
Union of Concerned Scientists Food and Environment Program
Virginia Association for Biological Farming
Wallace Center at Winrock International
Wild Farm Alliance
Women, Food, and Agriculture Network