

FAMILY FARMING AND FARM BILLS

2018 SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

The primary objectives of national agricultural policies are to protect net farm income in challenging economic times, improve the quality of rural life, and increase the number of family farmers. Family farmers and ranchers continue to provide a reliable supply of food, fuel and fiber and serve as stewards of our nation's resources. U.S. agriculture touches all Americans and others around the world. It is important that the next farm bill reflects the diversity of the people and interests impacted by the legislation.

Over the last several years, producers have been subjected to dramatic reductions in commodity and livestock prices, increasing the need for timely passage of a new farm bill. In addition to price pressure that has reduced net farm income by half over the last five years, devastating wildfires, hurricanes, and other natural disasters continue to punish American family farmers and ranchers and their communities. Legislation in 2018 must strengthen the safety net so that farmers and ranchers can continue to feed our country.

National Farmers Union believes a Farm Bill should be passed by September 30, 2018, the expiration of the 2014 Farm Bill. In the event a new Farm Bill is not passed on time, NFU encourages Congress to extend the 2014 Farm Bill in its entirety until a new Farm Bill is passed.

National Farmers Union believes the next farm bill should provide:

Increased and robust reference prices under the Price Loss Coverage program that accounts for cost of production,

Technical corrections to the Agricultural Risk Coverage program for improved performance,

Substantial reform to the Margin Protection Program,

Expansion of insurance options for livestock,

Continuation of disaster relief programs,

Meaningful mechanisms to address oversupply of grain and dairy,

Incentives to encourage young and beginning farmers to enter and remain in agriculture,

Strong nutrition programs to provide a safety net against hunger,

Increases to overall conservation spending,

Additional acreage under the Conservation Reserve Program,

Maintenance of funding for working lands conservation programs that promote active stewardship and locally led conservation activities, and;

Climate mitigation research and technical assistance at national and local levels.