

# A FARM BILL FOR A THRIVING FUTURE FOR US ALL



## INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES, NOT CORPORATIONS

The last 50 years of food and agriculture policy have enabled an increase in the consolidation of our food system. As the pandemic and the recent formula shortage reminded us - a consolidated food system is a fragile one. The 2023 Farm Bill must ensure the resiliency of our food systems by investing in community infrastructure for local and regional food systems.

## Break Up Consolidation of Our Food and Farm Systems

Corporate concentration is forcing family farmers out of business, driving down wages, and harming our environment. To address this, Congress should:

- Expand public litigation opportunities to improve oversight and enforcement of all antitrust laws and create an Office of the Special Investigator for Competition Matters.
- Penalize anticompetitive behavior by ending subsidies, insurance, and contracts for those that harm workers and pollute the environment.
- Implement and enforce the Packers and Stockyards Act and provide legislative updates to unfair, discriminatory, or deceptive practices.
- Require meat packers to purchase 50% of their cattle supply directly from farmers and ranchers in cash markets instead of from consolidated supply.
- Strengthen USDA's enforcement authority over live poultry dealers.
- Enact a moratorium on new Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) and on expanding existing CAFOs.

## Reform Crop Subsidies and Insurance

Federal farm subsidy programs should equitably support all farmers, including BIPOC farmers using diverse farming practices. To achieve this, Congress must:

- Expand crop subsidies and insurance for BIPOC producers, including by simplifying and promoting the Whole Farm Revenue Protection program.
- Expand, improve, and provide insurance and disaster relief for local food hubs, farmers markets, and food cooperatives; as well as farm workers and other food chain workers
- End all subsidies, insurance, and contracts for producers and companies who harm workers and do not meet conservation program requirements, including all CAFOs.
- End subsidies for synthetic chemical inputs, including pesticides and fertilizers.

# Increase Regulation of CAFOs

The intensive production of unprecedented numbers of animals in Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations is an unmitigated disaster for rural communities, public health, regional economies, and the environment. Congress must:

- Ban the use of antibiotics for disease prevention purposes, reserving these drugs only to control a verified disease outbreak or to treat sick animals.
- Prohibit mandatory participation in checkoff programs and instead allow producers to participate on a voluntary basis.
- Employ and train more federal inspectors and enforce the Humane Methods of Slaughter Act of 1978.
- Pass new animal welfare standards for the transport, slaughter, and depopulation of livestock and poultry, including removing the HMSA poultry exemption and reducing the length of time farm animals can be transported without rest.
- Regulate air pollution and water pollution caused by CAFOs.

# Increase Transparency

A more just food system requires greater transparency across the agri-food system. This includes:

- Improving transparency in all food and agriculture government contracts at all levels. publicly reporting results and reviewing, to identify needed changes.
- Improving the public information provided on operators who commit labor violations.
- Developing a GAO report as outlined in the Protecting America's Meatpacking Workers Act.
- Requiring and regulating labeling that provides consumers with transparency around animal welfare, labor practices, environmental impacts, and any health warnings
- Ending the undue influence of corporations over publicly-funded research, and making publicly-funded research more available.
- Increasing research on seed and animal breeds that are resilient and regionally adapted to climate change, and on organic and agroecological systems.

# Invest In Community Infrastructure

More infrastructure is needed to support equitable, resilient, and regenerative regional food systems, with a focus on cooperative and community-owned operations. Congress should:

- Strengthen and expand value-added production that connects producers to consumers
- Invest in community-owned, appropriately-scaled aggregation, processing, and distribution infrastructure.
  - Provide capital, credit, tax breaks, and technical assistance to community food enterprises, prioritizing BIPOC -owned businesses.
  - Invest in livestock processing infrastructure and creating opportunities for BIPOC ownership of these operations
  - Increase funding for the Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program.
  - Reauthorize the Healthy Food Financing Initiative, with particular attention to funding BIPOC and community-governed enterprises.
- Reform the Local Agriculture Market Program to (1) restore full funding for grants, (2) improve accessibility for worker-owned cooperatives and community-led organizations to apply for funding, (3) expand the definition of "value-added agricultural product" to include those that improve soil health and other ecosystem benefits.
- Fully fund and implement the Good Food Purchasing Program adoption at all levels.

*The HEAL (Health, Environment, Agriculture, Labor) Food Alliance is a national multi-sector, multi-racial coalition. HEAL is led by its member-organizations, who represent about two million rural and urban farmers, ranchers, fishers, farm and food chain workers, Indigenous groups, scientists, public health advocates, and community organizers united in their commitment to transformed food systems.*