

A FARM BILL FOR A THRIVING FUTURE FOR US ALL



NOURISHING PEOPLE

Current federal food and agriculture programs have failed to meet the basic needs of producers, workers, consumers, and their communities. The recent pandemic has exacerbated inequities, leaving one in three families in the U.S. food insecure. Centering the needs of the most vulnerable requires expansion of nutrition assistance programs in scope and scale.

The 2023 Farm Bill must expand the social safety net to ensure that everyone has access to and can afford nourishing food – a fundamental human right.

Protect and Expand Nutrition Assistance Programs

Affordable, fair, sustainable, and culturally-appropriate food can and should be the norm in every neighborhood. This requires restoring, increasing, and protecting food and nutrition programs and expanding healthy and sustainable options within those programs. This includes:

- Increasing overall funding for SNAP and expanding accessibility:
 - Extend SNAP's entitlement structure to all U.S. Territories.
 - Improve access for low-income college students.
 - Remove work-for-food rules and all additional work requirements for SNAP eligibility.
 - Create alternative methods of verification for food insecure farmers and agricultural workers to qualify for food assistance programs.
 - Abolish barriers for immigrants, returning citizens, formerly incarcerated individuals, and able-bodied adults ages 18 to 49.
 - Eliminate the excess shelter deduction cap, and penalties that result in year-long ineligibility.
- Increasing program benefits:
 - Increase the amount per individual and family to reflect food inflation costs.
 - Boost benefits for older adults and people living with disabilities through a standard medical deduction.
 - Remove the ban on hot and prepared food.
 - Enable small BIPOC-owned restaurants and caterers to accept SNAP.
 - Expand SNAP recipients access to shopping at farmers markets.

- Improving and expanding the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP):
 - Increase overall funding for GusNIP and support for retail outlets to participate in GusNIP and purchase local products from BIPOC producers.
 - Make GusNIP less restrictive of qualifying purchases, including prepared foods, dried beans, dairy, eggs, and meat.
 - Remove Nutrition Incentive Grant match requirements.
 - Increase the proportion of GusNIP funds dedicated to Produce Prescription Programs.
- Expanding other nutrition programs:
 - Provide free, universal school breakfast and lunch.
 - Protect critical investments in The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).
 - Increase funding for USDA’s National Hunger Clearinghouse and Hunger Hotline.
 - Strengthen the buying relationship between local and regional producers and schools as in the Kids Eat Local Act.
 - Strengthen the local and regional food systems and improve access to fresh food at food pantries, schools, and other organizations as in the Fresh Produce Procurement Reform Act.
 - Implement the policies in the Farmers Market and Food Bank Local Revitalization Act
 - Funding increased vocational training in scratch cooking and sustainable food sourcing for culinary workers in schools and hospitals.
 - Allowing Medicare and Medicaid funds to reimburse for food and meals for prescription programs.

Prevent Food Waste

40% of food intended for human consumption is wasted. To ensure multifaceted approach to addressing food waste that provides opportunities for affordable, nutritional food, there should be:

- Standardized and clarified date labels on all food products with a uniform, nationwide policy in the form of the two labels: “BEST if Used By” to indicate quality, and “USE By” to indicate safety.
- Increased funding to reduce food waste and to support food recovery infrastructure, including grants and loans for the development of organic waste processing infrastructure; and link funds to Good Food Purchasing Program and other institutional procurement programs.
- Funding for local and regional food waste coordination.
- An elimination of barriers to surplus food donation as prescribed in the Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act of 1996.

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.