



• Commodities • Conservation • Credit • Crop Insurance • Energy •  
 • Forestry • Nutrition • Research, Extension, & Related Matters •  
 • Rural Development • Specialty Crops & Horticulture • Trade •

## General Member Survey on 2018 Farm Bill

While it seems we just finished writing the 2014 Farm Bill, leadership on both the House and Senate Agriculture Committees have indicated that they plan to begin working on the 2018 Farm Bill early next year. It is probably difficult to answer the questions about what is working and what isn't in the current bill as farmers will only receive their second commodity title payment in October of this year. Yet, Farm Bureau members need to be ready to answer a few very basic questions if we are going to continue to try and shape farm policy to meet our risk management needs for the future.

The following questions are designed to help us prioritize different options to improve the Farm Bill while also recognizing the likely budgetary challenges we face. Please note that this survey is for informational purposes only and does not replace our regular policy development process. For more information about specific Farm Bill topics, please visit <http://www.fb.org/farmbillworkinggroup/>.

### GENERAL QUESTIONS

- We anticipate another strong push to separate nutrition programs from the rest of the Farm Bill. Consistent with Farm Bureau policy, we have previously opposed such measures as the current policy and political relationship between nutrition programs and farm programs has been the best course of action to ensure Congress can continue to pass a Farm Bill. Do we continue to hold that belief?
  - Yes
  - No
  - Undecided
  - Need More Information
  
- If there will be less money in the budget baseline for the next Farm Bill, prioritization of funding will be important. Please rank your top five Farm Bill titles in order of importance with #1 being the most important.
  - Commodity Programs (crop and dairy programs)
  - Conservation Programs
  - Crop Insurance
  - Energy
  - Rural Development
  - Trade
  - Research and Extension
  - Forestry
  - Nutrition
  - Credit
  - Specialty Crops
  - Miscellaneous (beginning farmers/ranchers programs, livestock health, etc.)

## COMMODITY PROGRAMS

- The last Farm Bill allowed farmers to reallocate (without adding to) their base acres and update their yields. Our current policy supports including another update in the next Farm Bill. Should farmers be allowed to update (without adding) base and yields in the next Farm Bill?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
- The last Farm Bill created two new revenue protection programs; one program was a county-based program (ARC-CO) and the other was an individual program (ARC-IC). The ARC-CO program was very popular with corn and soybean producers with more than 90% of corn and soybean acres being enrolled in the program. While payments under ARC-CO have been significant for many counties, there are also numerous counties that have not received any assistance under the program. Current farm revenue projections and the workings of the program mean significant/any payments during the last two years of this Farm Bill (2017 and 2018) are very unlikely. Should we continue to support the ARC-CO program?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
- Under the current ARC-CO program there have been some significant county-to-county differences in revenue support payments. Should adjustments be made to the ARC-CO program to reduce the county-to-county payment differences?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
- Some have complained that only using a 5-year Olympic Moving Average under ARC-CO doesn't truly capture the yield history in some areas. Should the number of years used for an Olympic Moving Average be adjusted when determining historical revenue under the ARC-CO program?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
- Should the ARC program be modified by changing the geographic area from a county-based program to a more regional or state-based program when determining ARC-CO payments?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
- Some have expressed concern over USDA's decision to use NASS county yields to determine county revenue under the ARC-CO program. If the ARC-CO continues as an option within the commodity title, which of the following "yield" numbers should be the primary yield used to set county program yields?  
 NASS  
 RMA  
 Other (Please identify: \_\_\_\_\_)  
 Need More Information

- Less than 1 percent of acreage was enrolled in the ARC-IC program due to its complicated nature and reduced coverage level. Should we continue to support ARC-IC as a farm program option in the next Farm Bill?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
  
- If yes, should the ARC-IC program be modified to make it a better program for a greater number of producers?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
  
- Should the reference prices for the PLC program be maintained at current levels (wheat – \$5.50/bu., peanuts – \$535/ton, corn – \$3.70/bu., grain sorghum – \$3.95/bu., soybeans – \$8.40/bu. and rice – \$14.00/cwt.)?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
  
- If no, should the reference prices be increased or decreased?  
 Increased  
 Decreased
  
- One suggestion for improving the safety net centers on cottonseed – should cottonseed to be declared an “other oilseed” and therefore become eligible for ARC or PLC program . Do you agree with this suggestion?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
  
- Farm Bureau policy has long supported the idea of “farm savings accounts.” Given the uncertain nature of agriculture, is this an idea that should be given more priority for implementation within the next Farm Bill?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information

**If you answered “No” to the above question, feel free to skip the next three questions.**

- The account would likely have a cap on the amount of money a farmer/rancher could deposit each year. What should that cap be?  
 \$50,000 or less  
 \$50,001-\$100,000  
 \$100,001-\$150,000  
 \$150,001 to \$200,000  
 More than \$200,000  
 Need More Information
  
- Should the account be eligible to be invested and grow tax-free using after-tax dollars such as a “Roth” account or should it work similar to an IRA or 401k using pre-tax dollars and be subject to taxes when money is removed?  
 After-Tax with Tax Free Growth  
 Pre-Tax with Withdrawals Subject to Taxes

- Should the program include a limited USDA match to the funds a farmer/rancher would deposit in the account if the individual agreed to give up some/all Farm Bill payments (commodity programs) or agreed to reduced crop insurance subsidies?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information

## DAIRY

- Most dairy producers are not satisfied with the safety net provided by the Dairy Margin Protection Program (MPP). Last year, dairy producers paid \$70 million in premiums and only received a payout of \$750,000. In 2016, dairy producers paid more than \$20 million in premiums and have received \$11 million in payments. While this program is more of an insurance product vs. a target price program, should changes be made to this program to improve its effectiveness as a risk management tool?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
- If we support making changes, should we support moving the average feed cost calculation under MPP to a regional or state level?  
 Move feed calculation to regional level  
 Move feed calculation to state level
- Should the feed cost formula be increased?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
- There are a variety of other options that may be explored to improve dairy risk management tools. Please rank your top priorities in order of importance with #1 being the most important.  
 Improve the Livestock Gross Margin program  
 Make MPP feed costs regional  
 Adjust MPP feed ration formula higher  
 Lower MPP premiums rates  
 Expand MPP coverage options  
 Eliminate MPP and replace it with a new program  
 Bring back the Milk Income Loss Contract  
 Lower premium rates for new, beginning and small dairy farmers  
 Other (Identify: \_\_\_\_\_)

## CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

- The vast majority of conservation title funding is comprised of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). If we are asked to prioritize these programs because of a lack of funding, how would you rank them in importance? Please signify your highest priority with a 1 and then rate your second and third priorities.  
 CRP  
 EQIP  
 CSP

- The 2014 Farm Bill capped enrollment in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) at 24 million acres. Given current commodity prices, some are hoping to increase that acreage cap. Should the enrollment cap on CRP acreage be increased?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
- If the CRP acreage cap is increased, it is likely that funding may be cut from other programs. Which program area should be cut in order to pay for increasing the CRP acreage cap?  
 CSP  
 EQIP  
 Other Conservation Programs
- Should changes be made to State Technical Committees in order to make them more “ag” friendly?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information  
 Do you have suggestions on how to improve the committees?
- Currently, 60 percent of EQIP dollars are mandated to be used to address conservation issues of livestock producers. Should this level of support be continued?  
 Yes  
 No (  Increased  Decreased )  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information

## CROP INSURANCE

- Maintaining funding for the federal crop insurance program was our top priority during the prior Farm Bill debate. Does it remain our top priority?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
- Some farmers continue to worry that after several years of disasters, their Actual Production History has fallen dramatically and their premium rates have increased. Is this something that should be addressed?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
- **If** cuts **had** to be made to the premium discounts farmers receive through the federal crop insurance program, what is your preferable method for reducing crop insurance premium discounts? Please rank them in the order of your preference starting with #1:  
 Reducing the overall premium discount level.  
 Prohibiting premium discounts for farmers earning above specific income levels.  
 Reducing premium discounts for farmers earning above specific income levels (means testing).  
 Capping federal premium discounts. At what approximate level?  
 \$50,000  \$100,000  \$200,000  \$500,000  No Cap   
 Other

- Federal crop insurance subsidies are greater for enterprise units relative to basic and optional units, and subsidies decline as buy-up levels increase. Please see chart below:

Farmer Crop Insurance Premium Discount Schedule Percentage									
Insurance Plan	Deductible Level Percentage								
	CAT	50	45	40	35	30	25	20	15
Basic & Optional Units	100	67	64	64	59	59	55	48	38
Enterprise Units	n/a	80	80	80	80	80	77	68	53
Area Yield Plans	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	59	59	55	55
Area Revenue Plans	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	59	55	55	49
Whole Farm Units	n/a	80	80	80	80	80	80	71	56

Assuming you could suggest specific premium subsidy reductions within this framework, please rank the following in order of your preference starting with #1:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Reduce the premium discount levels at lower buy-ups and maintain the current discounts at higher buy-up levels.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reduce the premium discount levels at the higher buy-ups and maintain the current discounts at lower buy-up levels.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Reduce the premium discount levels for enterprise (and whole farm) units to those of basic and optional units.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Something else: (please specify)

- A disease outbreak, integrator bankruptcy, or other issue could leave some livestock and poultry producers with empty buildings and no income. Should USDA work to create a Business Interruption Insurance program that is federally subsidized, but requires producers to pay a yearly premium for the program if they wish to participate (similar to federal crop insurance)?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Yes
- \_\_\_\_\_ No
- \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided
- \_\_\_\_\_ Need More Information

- If you support this idea, what is the major commodity that you produce and on which you would be willing to pay a premium to be covered by such a policy?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Poultry (broilers and/or laying hens, or turkeys)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hogs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cattle
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sheep
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other

- The current size, structure, efficiency, and extensive movement inherent in the United States livestock industry will present unprecedented challenges in the event of a Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) outbreak. It will be nearly impossible to control an FMD outbreak in livestock dense areas without the rapid use of tens of millions of doses of FMD vaccine. Currently, the United States does not have anywhere near enough FMD vaccine to implement such a program in the U.S. USDA projects an annual cost of \$150 million in order to produce enough vaccine and store it. Is this something Farm Bureau should make a priority in the next Farm Bill?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Yes
- \_\_\_\_\_ No
- \_\_\_\_\_ Undecided
- \_\_\_\_\_ Need More Information

## OTHER

- Given the credit situation in agriculture, should the loan amounts for FSA credit programs be increased?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
  
- If we increase the amount available per producer, fewer producers might be helped without an increase in the overall funding amount. Congress likely will ask for any funding increases to come from other Farm Bill titles. Do we support a funding reduction in other Farm Bill titles to pay for an increase to these programs?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
  
- New and beginning farmer programs were significantly expanded in the last Farm Bill. Should funding for these credit programs be increased?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
  
- If funding for these programs is increased, it is likely that funding will be taken from other Farm Bill titles. Do we support taking that funding from other Farm Bill titles?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
  
- Should the amount designated for state block grants for fruit and vegetable producers be increased?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information
  
- Should block grants be used to help educate producers about the new Food Safety Modernization Act or will this take too much funding away from research, promotion and educational purposes?  
 Yes  
 No  
 Undecided  
 Need More Information