



WHY IS THE FARM BILL IMPORTANT TO MARYLAND?



Maryland boasts **12,300** farms that cover **2,030,000** million acres. In 2014, sales of farm and ranch products contributed **\$2,661,687,000** to the state's economy.

The farm bill touches everyone in **Maryland** in numerous ways. It is targeted to farmers and ranchers, used to support infrastructure and economic development in rural communities, incentivizes maintenance of good conservation practices and helps provide access to food for those less fortunate and breakfasts and lunches for school children.

The farm bill provides a safety net to farmers and ranchers during difficult times.

From 2009 to 2015, USDA invested more than **\$660 million** in **Maryland** for programs that provide access to credit, support a strong farm safety net, and promote new markets for farm and ranch products.



In 2016, **Maryland** farmers and ranchers received:

- **\$2,113,273** in Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) and Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs that provide revenue and price loss payments to eligible producers; and
- **\$9,928,532** in commodity loans to eligible producers who use their crops as collateral.



The farm bill provides credit to beginning farmers and ranchers and to those who are temporarily unable to obtain private or commercial credit elsewhere.

In 2016, **Maryland** received **\$15.6 million** in farm loans including:

- **\$8,906,150** from the guaranteed loan program. USDA guarantees loans made by conventional ag lenders for up to 95% of any loss. In 2016, USDA guaranteed **11** loans to beginning farmers;
- **\$6,426,096** in direct loan programs that are provided to those unable to obtain guaranteed loans. In 2016, USDA funded **5** operating loans that included **38** direct loans to beginning farmers and **15** direct loans targeted to underserved producers;
- **\$271,800** in microloans which are direct farm ownership and operating loans designed to meet the needs of smaller, non-traditional and niche type operations. In 2016, **13** microloans were made.

The farm bill provides funding for conservation programs to help farmers and ranchers keep land in production while improving the condition of natural resources.

From 2009 to 2015, USDA invested **\$331 million** to conserve and protect **Maryland's** land, water and air resources.



In 2015, **Maryland** received conservation assistance including:

- **\$10.2 million** in Environmental Quality Incentive Payments to provide financial and technical assistance to agricultural producers to plan and implement conservation practices that improve their land;
- **\$1.3 million** in Conservation Stewardship Program payments that supports ongoing stewardship of private agricultural lands by providing payments and technical assistance for maintaining and enhancing natural resources; and
- **\$11.7 million** to enroll **63,326 acres** in Conservation Reserve Program to remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production and plant species that will improve environmental health and quality of the soil.

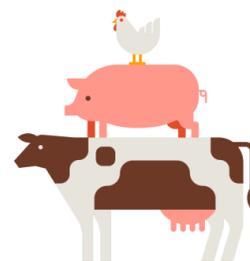


The farm bill helps fund a portion of the crop insurance programs purchased by farmers to provide a safety net for times of price and weather disasters.

In 2015, 68% of all eligible acres were insured under the crop insurance program. In **Maryland**, this included:

- **904.4 thousand** acres or cropland;
 - **2.3 thousand acres** were enrolled in the Pasture, Rangeland and Forest program and **\$30 thousand** in indemnities were paid;
 - **\$20.2 million** in government-paid premium discounts to make the crop insurance policies more affordable for producers; and
 - **\$8.1 million** in crop insurance indemnities.
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The farm bill provides authority for several ad hoc disaster assistance programs to help producers suffering from maladies such as droughts, floods, freezes, fires and tornadoes.



In 2016, **Maryland** received **\$244.8 thousand** in supplemental and ad hoc disaster assistance including:

- **\$85.2 thousand** in Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory, or prevented planting occurs due to natural disasters;
- **\$13.9 thousand** in Livestock Indemnity Program payments that provide partial reimbursements to eligible livestock owners for livestock losses suffered due to natural disaster or other emergencies; and
- **\$65.7 thousand** for the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program to provide emergency assistance to eligible producers that have losses due to diseases or adverse weather.



The farm bill promotes agricultural exports.

In 2015, exports of farm and ranch products contributed **\$647.2 million** to the **Maryland** economy.

The farm bill supports producers of fruits and vegetables.

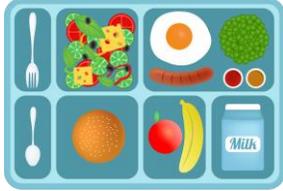
Maryland received **\$3.3 million** from the Farm Bill Specialty Crop Block Grant Program to use on **56** projects to increase competitiveness and profitability of producers from 2008 to 2015.

- In 2015, **Maryland** received **\$3.5 million** to fund the Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program to be used in **142** elementary schools; and
- USDA helps promote farmer's markets through promotion programs and extra funding for the purchase of fruits and vegetables at **Maryland's 165** farmers' markets.



The Farm Bill provides opportunities for better health for Maryland citizens.

In 2016:



- **45,784,977 breakfasts** were served to **277,334** children in the school breakfast program;

- **73,907,262 lunches** were served to **446,283** children in the school lunch program;
- **139,576 people** participated in the Women, Infants and Children Program; and
- **701,358 people** were assisted by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

The farm bill helps support economic development for rural areas of the state.

From 2009 to 2015, USDA invested **\$3.1 billion** to support affordable housing, create jobs and promote economic opportunity for those who live, work and raise their families in rural **Maryland**.



The farm bill provides funding to promote infrastructure.

These development programs include assistance for expanding and improving broadband and telecommunications, water and wastewater, electricity and construction of community facilities like fire stations and libraries. From 2009 to 2015, USDA invested **\$614 million** in infrastructure development.

Despite its name, the farm bill affects far more than the small population of Americans who work as farmers or ranchers.