



Contacts: Mike Tomko
(410) 446-8829
miket@fb.org

Hilary Kirwan
202-572-3277
hkirwan@edf.org

Justin Darisse
240-426-5912
jdarisse@ncfc.org

Hannah Packman
303-819-8737
hpackman@nfudc.org

Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance Members Testify on Opportunities to Tackle Climate Change in Senate Hearing

WASHINGTON, March 11, 2021 – Four witnesses representing the Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance’s (FACA) founding organizations and co-chairs – American Farm Bureau Federation, Environmental Defense Fund, National Council of Farmer Cooperatives and National Farmers Union – testified today in front of the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry on the agriculture, food and forestry sectors’ role in delivering climate solutions.

Farmers, ranchers and forest owners are both on the frontlines of climate impacts and offer innovative, natural solutions through increased carbon sequestration in trees and soils and reduced GHG emissions.

In accordance with FACA’s guiding principles, the four representatives stressed to lawmakers that federal climate policy must be built upon voluntary, incentive-based programs and market-driven opportunities, promote resilience and adaptation in rural communities, and be grounded in scientific evidence. In addition, solutions proposed by Congress and the Biden administration must be strongly bipartisan and accommodate the diverse needs of producers and landowners, regardless of size, geographic region or commodity.

“Throughout my lifetime of farming, I constantly have sought out ways to reduce my environmental impact — it is good for the environment, it is good for my farm and it is the right thing to do. I believe the timing is right for all industries, including agriculture, to come together and find solutions that will sustain our way of life for generations to come,” said John Reifsteck, an Illinois grain farmer and the chairman of GROWMARK Inc. testifying on behalf of the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives (NCFC).

National Farmers Union (NFU) member Clay Pope said, “FACA sets a new, higher floor for federal policy discussions around agriculture and climate change, and gives clear, farmer-backed direction to policymakers.” The sixth-generation farmer and rancher from Loyal, Oklahoma, added that “Congress must heed these recommendations and quickly act upon them. America’s family farmers and ranchers are already feeling the effects of climate change on their land — there is no time to waste.”

“Policy which addresses proactive measures to influence climate conditions cannot be one-size-fits-all,” said Stefani Smallhouse, president of the Arizona Farm Bureau Federation and member of the American Farm Bureau board of directors. “Just as I have highlighted the unique needs of Arizona’s farmers and ranchers in the West, all regions of the U.S. can explain ways in which any given climate policy may or may not work for the landscape, industry and ecology present in that region.”

“The potential for farmers, ranchers and forestland owners to contribute to the climate change solution is well-documented. My family has seen it in our operation and see opportunities for it to happen on a far larger scale,” said Cori Wittman Stitt, a member of Environmental Defense Fund’s farmer advisory group and a partner in a diversified crop, cattle and timber operation in northern Idaho. “Farmers need Congress to act quickly to advance voluntary policies that maximize measurable net carbon sequestration and greenhouse gas reductions, while increasing the resilience of the land.”

FACA members developed more than 40 joint recommendations to guide the development of federal climate policy. Download the recommendations and see a full list of member organizations at aqclimatealliance.com.

###

The Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance consists of organizations representing farmers, ranchers, forest owners, agribusinesses, manufacturers, the food and innovation sector, state governments, sportsmen and environmental advocates. These groups have broken through historical barriers to develop and promote shared climate policy priorities across the entire agriculture, food and forestry value chains.