
# FORESTRY

# FARM BILL POLICY PRIORITIES

## RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE 118TH CONGRESS

FACA
Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance

## ABOUT FACA

The Food and Agriculture Climate Alliance (FACA) initially began as an informal dialogue between eight organizations discussing opportunities for the food, agriculture, and forestry sectors to help advance climate solutions across the supply chain. Since formally launching in 2020, FACA has grown into an 80+ member coalition.

Today, our broad membership represents farmers, ranchers, forest owners, agribusinesses, manufacturers, the food and innovation sector, state governments, higher education associations, sportsmen and sportswomen, and environmental advocates.

FACA has served as a resource to Members of Congress and Administration officials. Our past recommendations have been credited with shaping federal laws and programs.

FACA members are united in support of federal climate policies that:

1. **Are voluntary, market- and incentive-based;**
2. **Advance science-based outcomes;**
3. **Promote resilience and help rural economies better adapt to climate change;**
4. **Ensure equitable opportunities for all farmers, ranchers, and forest owners, including historically underserved and small producers; and**
5. **Are strongly bipartisan.**

## OPPORTUNITIES IN THE 2023 FARM BILL

U.S. farmers, ranchers, and forest owners are at the forefront of national efforts to address climate change. But we cannot do it alone. Further reducing emissions throughout the agricultural and forestry supply chain will require a comprehensive effort involving financial and technical assistance, research investments, proactive response to innovation, public-private partnerships, and a commitment to equitable opportunities for all producers.

With that in mind, FACA has developed a suite of policy recommendations for the upcoming farm bill that would help our sectors achieve our climate mitigation potential while preserving and creating new economic opportunities. These recommendations reflect FACA's guiding principles and fall into six categories, which include:

- **Conservation, Risk Management, and Credit**
- **Energy**
- **Food Waste**
- **Forestry**
- **Livestock and Dairy**
- **Research, Extension, and Innovation**

FACA recognizes the enormous importance of farm bill programs and supports critical investments in the farm safety net and disaster assistance, as well as for conservation, forestry, rural development, market access and research programs. These programs are all vital to sustaining rural livelihoods and protecting our nation's ability to produce the most abundant, affordable, and safe food supply in the world.

FACA's 23-member Steering Committee developed farm bill policy recommendations to advance voluntary bipartisan climate solutions. We urge both chambers of Congress and the President to act this year to pass this essential legislation, which impacts every family in America.

## STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

AEM · American Farm Bureau Federation · APLU Board on Agriculture Assembly · American Sugar Alliance · asta american seed trade association · Bio Biotechnology Innovation Organization · CIRB Crop Insurance and Reinsurance Bureau, Inc. · CropLife America · Ducks Unlimited · Environmental Defense Fund · Farm Credit · FMI The Food Industry Association · International Fresh Produce Association · NAFO National Alliance of Forest Owners · NASDA · NCBA National Cattlemen's Beef Association · National Cotton Council of America · NCFC National Council of Farmer Cooperatives · National Corn Growers Association · National Farmers Union · NMPF National Milk Producers Federation · The Nature Conservancy

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FACA supports voluntary, market- and incentive-based policies to create natural climate solutions through forestry and forest conservation at scale from U.S. forests. These efforts must also include safeguards to ensure positive outcomes for forests and the climate. These recommendations will advance the role of forests as a climate solution in the Farm Bill.

FACA supports climate-informed forest management and restoration, including cross-boundary efforts to reduce wildfire risk and improve forest health. This work should be supported by advancing forest-carbon science, data, information, and analysis. This includes research and full life cycle assessment of forest products across different forest types, harvesting practices, forest management, terrain, and regeneration methods in the United States. Our recommendations include policies that reduce barriers to participation in voluntary markets which will increase stakeholders' ability to address climate concerns.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

NOTE:
Recommendations are numbered for ease of organization and review. Numeric position does not indicate order of importance.

1. **Reduce barriers to participation in voluntary, high-quality forest carbon markets.**

   A. Expand the Landscape Scale Restoration (LSR) program to increase the authorization for climate mitigation practices and support landowners entering voluntary forest carbon markets. This would also include an expanded scope of the LSR program while providing maximum flexibility for the program's non-federal cost share to enable more conservation outcomes.

   B. Invest in and offer grant opportunities to develop and advance technologies and approaches that enhance forest carbon project integrity and build confidence in market participation.

   C. Establish a program to provide loan guarantees for environmental impact bonds, loans, or other investment vehicles to entities engaged in aggregation of sustainable forestry practices for the purpose of financing forest carbon projects developed for voluntary carbon markets.

2. **Invest in the reforestation supply chain, including tree nursery and seed bank infrastructure expansion.**

   A. Address the national shortage of seedlings needed for reforestation through increased technical assistance and training for native seed collection and seedling production and addressing other workforce issues.

   B. Augment existing research and technical assistance programs to support natural regeneration.

3. **Provide voluntary, incentive-based tools and resources for landowners to build climate resilience and increase the climate mitigation of their forests. This includes support for additional technical assistance measures for sustainable, climate-informed private forest management and reforestation.**

4. **Continue research and innovation for the use of wood to expand markets and maximize the benefits toward meeting climate objectives, including the reauthorization and full funding of the wood innovation grant program.**

**5** **Support programs to expand the federal government's commitment to reflect the carbon benefits of advanced wood construction. Policies to reward the carbon benefits of forest products must be based on scientifically sound life cycle analysis and include safeguards to promote positive outcomes for forests and the climate.**

**6** **Increase federal investment in forestry-related research to ensure farmers, ranchers, forest landowners, and Tribal Nations have access to the scientifically rigorous tools and information they need to build climate resilience and increase the climate mitigation of their forests.**

A. Increase investment in the Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) program to reflect growing program needs and enhance forest carbon science and ecologically beneficial decision-making.

B. Increase investment in research to improve our understanding of belowground carbon, carbon sequestration, emissions reduction, and the co-benefits of "climate-smart" management.

C. Support research and advancements in forest carbon lifecycle accounting to understand the carbon footprint of wood products relative to more carbon-intensive building materials.

**7** **Create and optimize climate benefits within public forests and grasslands, such as increasing wildfire resilience and maintaining clean water sources for millions of Americans.**

A. Provide additional authorities to accelerate and expand the appropriate use of prescribed fire and ecologically beneficial wildfire mitigation activities on lands managed by the Forest Service or the Department of the Interior. This includes close cooperation with states, Tribal Nations, and private landowners on controlled burns to ensure they reduce risk and provide substantial benefits to public and private lands and communities.

B. Support efforts to gather and analyze data to determine the effectiveness of current fire suppression strategies and the impact on public and private lands.

C. Provide authorities that enable USDA to partner with adjacent landowners to reduce wildfire risk on private lands. This includes cost-share instruments to facilitate and enhance cross-boundary work.

D. Remove barriers to participation in the Cooperative Fire Protection programs to facilitate greater uptake, especially in underserved communities and rural areas. This includes removing population and volunteer thresholds for participation.

**8** **Support reforestation and revegetation policies that encourage planting more fire-resistant species following a wildfire to reduce the spread of invasive species, reduce wildfire risk, and develop a future climate-resilient forested ecosystem. This includes post-fire revegetation policies that encourage planting native and adaptable species, that can include more fire-resistant plant species such as edible browses, to reduce the spread of invasive species, future suppression costs, fire size, and wildlife and private property losses; and support livestock grazing as a resource management tool and deterrent.**

A. Invest in improving science and deepening practical knowledge and implementation of natural regeneration of forest ecosystems and climate-informed replanting techniques.

**9** **Provide funding to enhance monitoring efforts to detect, identify, and evaluate the risks of non-native insects and diseases on forest health and carbon sequestration.**

A. Invest in improving biosecurity efforts at ports of entry, developing practical tools to improve forest management practices so landowners and managers can respond swiftly, and funding tree improvement efforts that use traditional breeding and informed and appropriate modern biotechnology tools.

B. Invest in research on the functional loss of tree species to non-native pests and pathogens.

**10** **Provide funding for prompt post-disturbance forest recovery and restoration activities to prevent the spread of invasive species and protect water quality.**