

The Farm Bill

An overview of the Farm Bill reauthorization process and key priorities
October 2023 | Rosy Brummette

Presentation Outline

1. What is the Farm Bill
2. The Key Negotiators
3. The reauthorization process and timeline
4. Spending in the Farm Bill
5. Overview of the Colorado priorities in the Farm Bill
6. Questions

What is the Farm Bill?

- The Farm Bill is an omnibus, multiyear law that governs an array of agriculture, rural and food programs.
- The farm bill is typically renewed every five years.
- Since the 1930s, Congress has enacted 18 Farm Bills.
- In recent history, there have been 12 titles of the Farm Bill.
- The 2018 Farm Bill expired **September 30, 2023**.

The 2018 Farm Bill (P.L. 115-334), by Title

Title I, Commodities: Provides support for major commodity crops, including wheat, corn, soybeans, peanuts, rice, dairy, and sugar, as well as disaster assistance.

Title II, Conservation: Encourages environmental stewardship of farmlands and improved management through land retirement programs, working lands programs, or both.

Title III, Trade: Supports U.S. agricultural export programs and international food assistance programs.

Title IV, Nutrition: Provides nutrition assistance for low-income households through programs including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Title V, Credit: Offers direct government loans and guarantees to producers to buy land and operate farms and ranches.

Title VI, Rural Development: Supports rural housing, community facilities, business, and utility programs through grants, loans, and guarantees.

Title VII, Research, Extension, and Related Matters: Supports agricultural research and extension programs to expand academic knowledge and help producers be more productive.

Title VIII, Forestry: Supports forestry management programs run by USDA's Forest Service.

Title IX, Energy: Encourages the development of farm and community renewable energy systems through various programs, including grants and loan guarantees.

Title X, Horticulture: Supports the production of specialty crops, USDA-certified organic foods, and locally produced foods and authorizes a regulatory framework for industrial hemp.

Title XI, Crop Insurance: Enhances risk management through the permanently authorized Federal Crop Insurance Program.

Title XII, Miscellaneous: Includes programs and assistance for livestock and poultry production, support for beginning farmers and ranchers, and other miscellaneous and general provisions.

The Key Negotiators

The U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry



Chairwoman Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)



Ranking Member John Boozman (R-AR)

The U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture

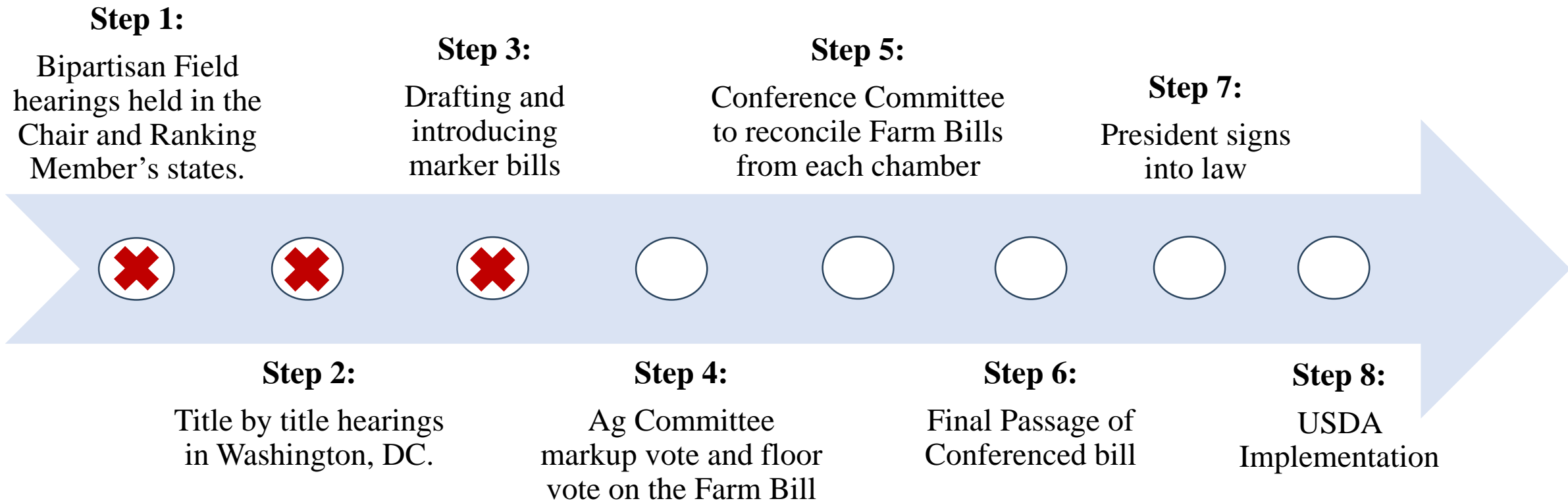


Chairman GT Thompson (R-PA)



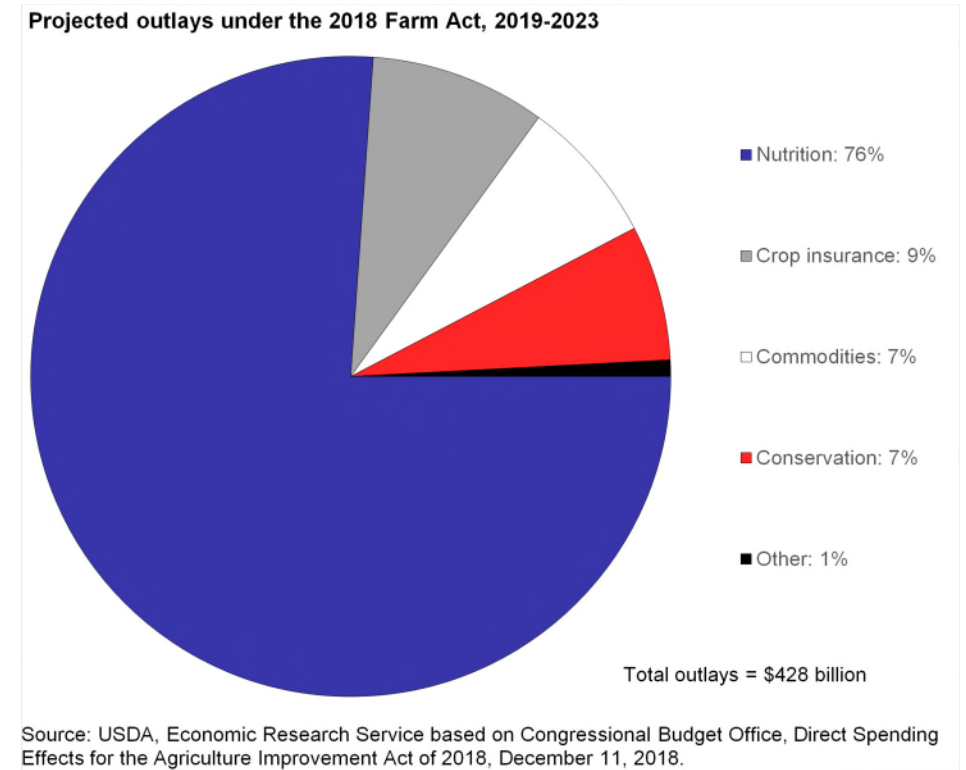
Ranking Member David Scott (D-GA)

2023 Farm Bill Process & Timeline



Spending in the Farm Bill

- Farm Bills authorize programs in two spending categories: (1) mandatory dollars and (2) discretionary dollars.
- Total Cost of mandatory programs in the 2018 Farm Bill was **\$428 billion** over 5 years.
 - Four titles accounted for 99% of the 2018 farm bill's mandatory spending:
 1. Nutrition (primarily SNAP)
 2. Commodities
 3. Crop Insurance
 4. Conservation
- **Mandatory spending programs** generally operate as entitlements, or the assumption that spending will continue in the future based on current law.
- **Discretionary spending programs** are authorized by the Farm Bill and then funded through the annual appropriations process.



XII Titles of the Farm Bill

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Supports agricultural research and extension programs to expand academic knowledge and help producers be more productive.

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Title II – Conservation

- Encourages environmental stewardship of farmlands and improved management through land retirement programs, working lands programs, or both. Most conservation programs have mandatory program spending.
- Major program categories:
 - Working lands (EQIP & CSP)
 - Easement programs (ACEP)
 - Partnership and Grant programs (RCPP, PL-566)
 - Land Retirement (CRP)
- Senator Bennet’s Conservation Title bills:
 - The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program Improvement Act, S. 1224
 - The Voluntary Groundwater Conservation Act, S. 2250
 - Healthy Watersheds, Healthy Communities Act, S. 2636
 - The Colorado River Salinity Control Fix Act, S. 2514
 - Small Farm Conservation Act, S. 2180

Title VI – Rural Development

- Supports rural housing, community facilities, business, and utility programs through grants, loans, and loan guarantees.
- Most USDA Rural Development programs rely on discretionary funding, which Congress authorizes in farm bills and funds through the annual appropriations process.
- USDA Rural Development programs primarily focus on **rural utility systems** (i.e., water, waste disposal, electricity, broadband), **rural businesses**, and **rural housing**.
- Eligibility:
 - Grants and direct loans are limited to rural areas with less than 10,000 people.
 - Loan guarantees are available for rural areas with less than 50,000 people.
- Senator Bennet’s Rural Development bills:
 - Rural Outdoor Investment Act, S.2604
 - Tribal Access to Clean Water, S. 2385
 - The CONNECT Act, S. 2663

Title VIII – Forestry

- Supports forestry management programs run by USDA's Forest Service.
- The federal government engages in four types of forestry activities:
 - Managing federal forests;
 - Providing financial, technical, or other resources to promote forest ownership and stewardship and the forest products industry generally (referred to as forestry assistance);
 - Sponsoring or conducting research to advance the science of forestry; and
 - Engaging in international forestry assistance and research.
- Senator Bennet's forestry bills:
 - Flexible Partnerships Act, S. 1693
 - Headwaters Protection Act, S. 1853
 - The Joint Chiefs Reauthorization Act, S. 2558
 - Protect the West Act, S. 540

Thank You!

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