



NEW FARM BILL MUST HARVEST SAVINGS AND NOT PLANT NEW ENTITLEMENTS

May 8, 2012

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the millions of members represented by our organizations, we write urging you to support efforts to cut Washington's outsized and outdated role in American agriculture.

Farm businesses are a testament to the skill, ingenuity, and persistence of Americans. While many sectors continue to feel the effects of the recession, American agriculture is one of the few bright spots in the economy. Net farm income is at \$98 billion, nearly doubling between 2001 and 2011. Farm businesses exported nearly \$140 billion worth of products, exceeding imports of agricultural products by more than \$37 billion. And it's estimated that one out of every 12 jobs is connected to agriculture.

With the Farm Bill reauthorization in progress, Congress must take this opportunity to reassess unnecessary and complicated federal policies that manipulate market decisions in this critical and vibrant component of our economy.

We believe the nearly \$30 billion reduction in federal spending on agriculture agreed to in the House Budget Resolution should be the *minimum* reduction in the Farm Bill. Eliminating direct payments, as the resolution suggests, is long overdue. Making meaningful reforms to the largest Washington-based support for agriculture, federally subsidized crop insurance, is also a must. The Congressional Budget Office estimates this program—which provided \$2.2 million in subsidies for just one agricultural producer's insurance premiums in 2011—will cost more than \$90 billion over the next ten years.

Also, we believe Congress must not create any new potentially budget-busting entitlement programs that would increase Washington's role in farm business decisions, such as efforts to put taxpayers on the hook for "shallow losses" in annual farm business revenue. And Congress should not use the Farm Bill to undo the responsible cuts to biofuels programs the House achieved in last year's minibus appropriations bill.

America's agricultural economy is strong. This strength and the glaring weakness of the federal budget—\$15 trillion in debt and trillion dollar deficits projected for the next decade—make it essential that Washington's role in agricultural policy be reformed. The House of Representatives must lead a full and open legislative debate on Farm Bill reauthorization. For more information, please contact Joshua Sewell of Taxpayers for Common Sense at 202-546-8500 x116, or josh@taxpayer.net.

Sincerely,

American Commitment
Americans for Prosperity
Americans for Tax Reform
Council for Citizens Against Government Waste
Competitive Enterprise Institute
FreedomWorks
The Heartland Institute
Heritage Action for America
National Taxpayers Union
Taxpayers for Common Sense
Taxpayers Protection Alliance